Hafa Adai!

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PSS partners with retirees, opens doors for 'substitutes'. PAGE 2

Policy committee for military buildup formed. PAGE 3

NEW ELECTION for Northern Islands mayoral race

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The CNMI Supreme Court has overturned the trial court's declaration of Ramona Taisakan Rebuenog as the winner in the Northern Islands mayoral race and ordered the Commonwealth Election Commission to conduct a new mayoral election as soon as possible.

The Supreme Court in its opinion issued on Friday, ruled that in the new election only the qualified voters—as determined by Superior Court associate judge David Wiseman—are permitted to vote.

"While the procedures adopted by the trial court to deduct illegal votes from the election results were proper, we hold that the trial court erred by declar-

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> While the procedures adopted by the trial court to deduct illegal votes from the election results were proper, we hold that the trial court erred by declaring illegal votes from the election winner under 1 CMC§6606
>
> —CNMI Supreme Court

Rebuenog

H1N1 FLU SHOT

Seven-year-old Nathan Asanuma, right, reacts as he receives a free H1N1 flu vaccination from a Department of Public Health nurse on Friday afternoon at the William S. Reyes Elementary School in Chalan Kanoa. Inset shows WSR Elementary School students holding consent forms as they anxiously wait for their turn to receive free H1N1 vaccination.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Fitial names 3 to Cabinet posts as Senate readies confirmation hearings

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial reappointed Public Safety Commissioner Santiago F. Tudela and appointed Martin C. Sablan as Department of Public Works secretary on Friday, setting in motion the Senate's preparation for the two appointees' confirmation hearings.

Fitial also named Virginia C. Villagomez to serve

See FITIAL on Page 4

CNMI residents, businesses continue to raise funds for Haiti

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Residents and corporate firms in the CNMI continue to raise funds for the victims of Haiti's Jan. 12 earthquake which claimed the lives of at least 150,000 people and displaced millions more.

See HAITI on Page 4

MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

A floating causeway delivers relief aid from the Military Sealift Command maritime prepositioning ship USNS *1st Lt. Jack Lummus* (T-AK-3011), which ordinarily operates out of Saipan and Guam, while local Haitians prepare the dock for landing in Port-au-Prince, Haiti last week.

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POLL RESULTS

Do you favor a proposal to increase business license fees as a means to boost government revenue?

Yes 64

No 120

Sunday, January 31, 2010

INSIDE

New Licensees
Four University of Loyola students passed national licensure examination for registered nurses.
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Airlift Halted
The U.S. military has halted flights carrying Haitian earthquake victims to the United States because of an apparent dispute over where seriously injured patients should be taken for treatment.
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Miss America
Miss Virginia Caressa Cameron won the 2010 Miss America title Saturday night after strutting in a skintight yellow dress, belting Beyonce's "Listen" from "Dreamgirls" and telling kids they should get outside more often.
Life & Style...Page 19

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Local

PSS partners with retirees, opens doors for 'substitutes'

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The tie-up between the Public School System and the Commonwealth Retirees Association has been described as a win-win situation by both parties.

Commissioner of Education Dr. Rita A. Sablan, accompanied by PSS human resource director Charlie Kenty, met with the retirees group last Friday at the JP Center and soon after established the long-term partnership.

Kenty said PSS' partnership with CRA will help the school system meet its teaching workforce on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. PSS has only some 500 classroom teachers for over 11,000 students in the CNMI.

Kenty admitted that PSS is always in need of additional teachers and wants to establish a pool of candidates as teacher substitutes.

He said many retirees have obtained expertise in specific field of interest that the PSS wants to tap into for its students.

Kenty's department, through the commissioner's approval, will hire the retirees as substitute teachers.

"We're opening the doors to those retirees who are interested in going back to the school by serving as substitutes. It is the objective of PSS to collaborate and establish partnership with CRA so we can establish an ongoing list of 'substitutes' for our school needs," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Sablan

PSS provided a $100 daily wage for substitutes with BA degrees while $60 per day for those with associate degrees.

The "ongoing list of candidates" is being proposed to be established village-by-village.

"What we're looking for is an existing and ongoing list of teachers who would be available in a given day and we want at least a village-by-village so if San Vicente Elementary School needs substitute teachers, the principal could take a look at the village's available retirees," he explained.

Based on PSS' human resources policy, a substitute teacher is subject to on-call basis and usually given short-term contract with the PSS.

Kenty, however, pointed out that there are also some restrictions on the proposed substituting of retirees because they are only allowed to double-dip in 60 days per year, or else their retirement benefits would be affected.

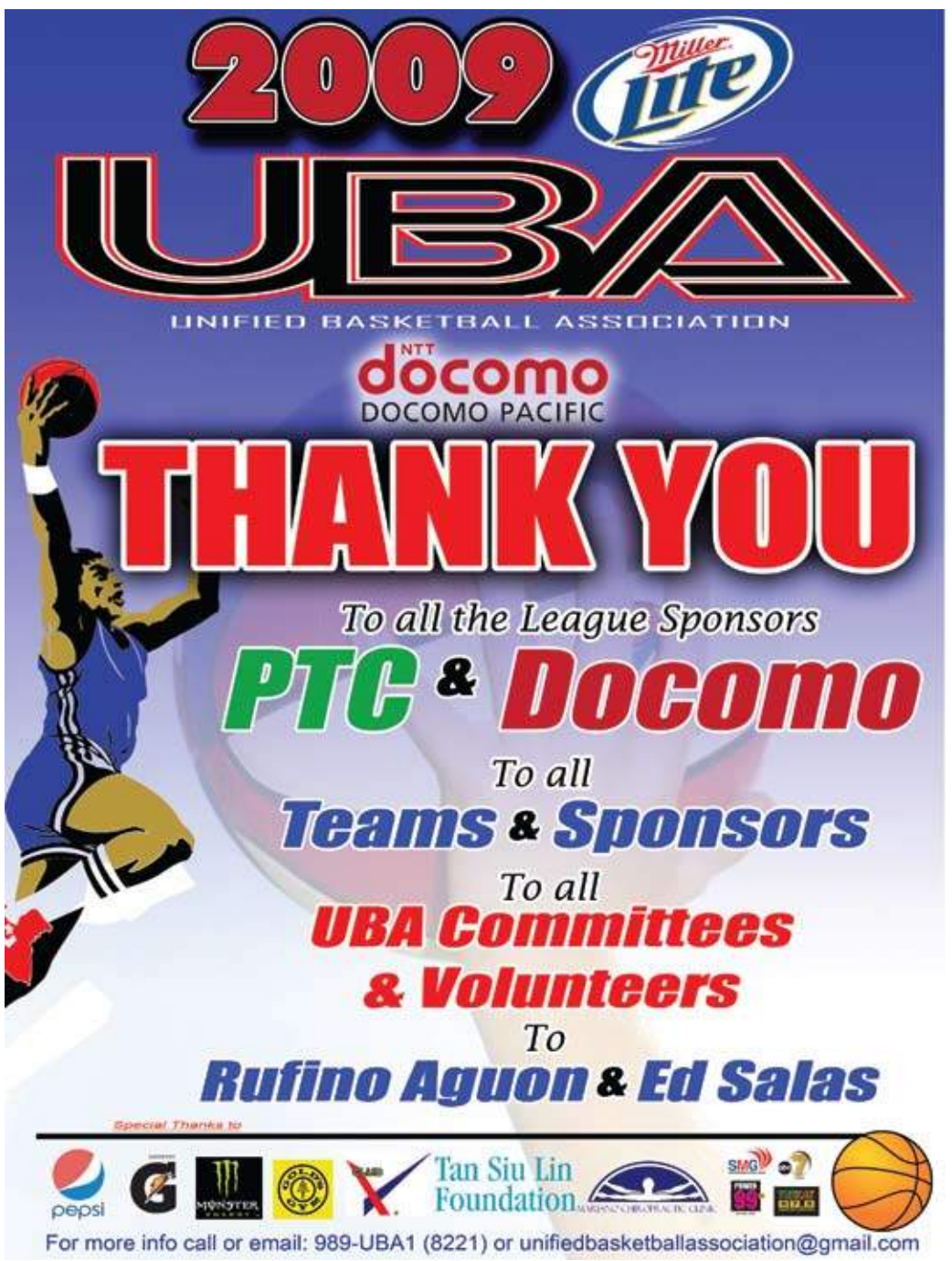
Kenty said PSS wants to establish a rolling substitute program for retirees.

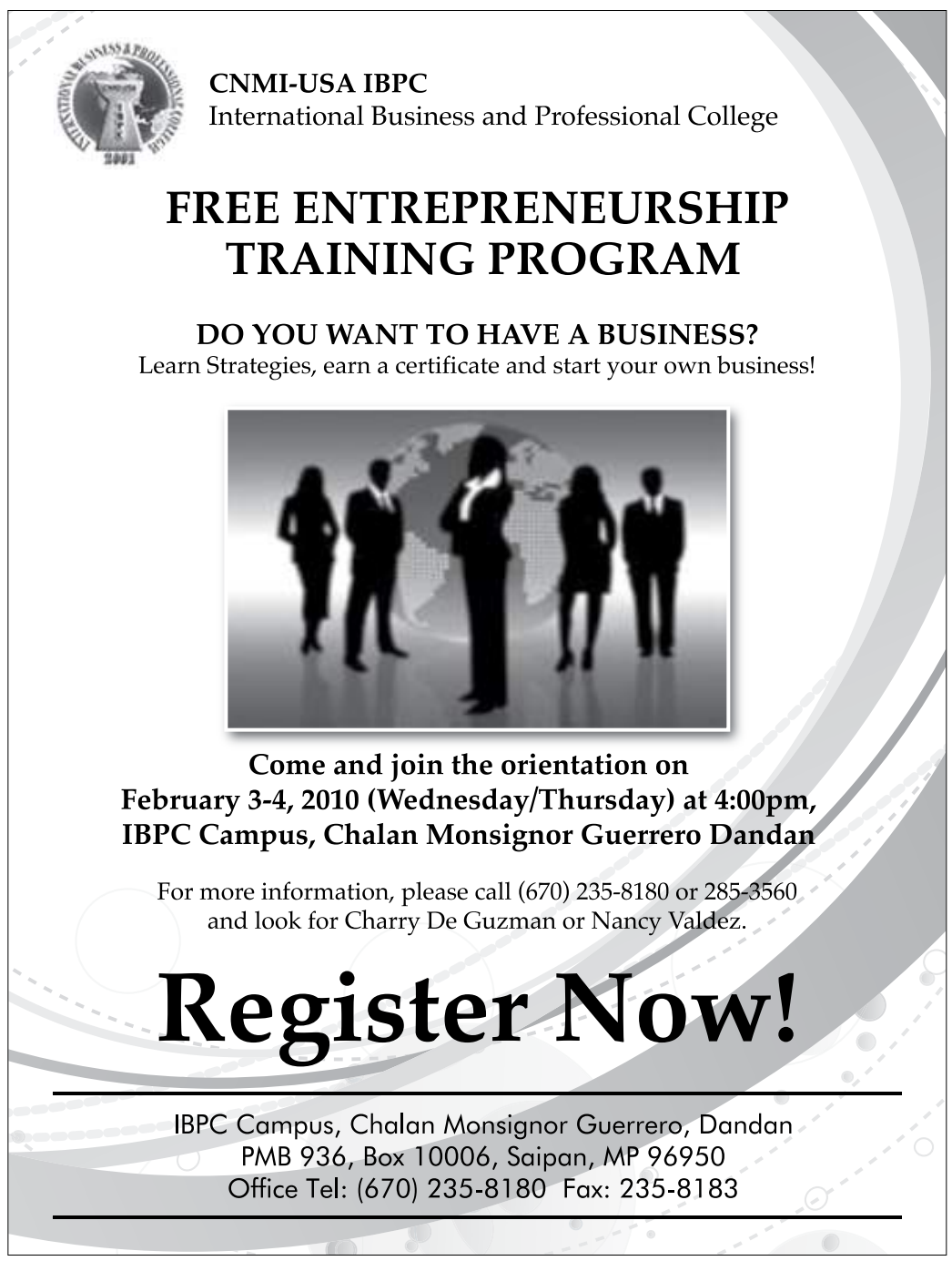
Commissioner Sablan, meantime, described as "very receptive" the initial feedback from the officials of the association and more discussion will be scheduled with the members in its next assemblies.

The commissioner said PSS is willing to conduct workshops before the retirees actually serve the students in the classrooms.

To date, PSS recorded 71 percent of its teachers as highly qualified who pass all three requirements—obtain a degree, valid teaching certificate, and passed Praxis tests.

The U.S. Department of Education has given CNMI-PSS until July 2011 to comply with the highly qualified teachers mandate pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act.

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Policy committee for military buildup formed

The Military Integration Management Committee Policy Committee convened last week to discuss the plan of action for the CNMI in regards to the impending military buildup in our region.

The policy committee is chaired by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial with Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos as vice chairman. The Commonwealth's leaders make up the rest of the policy committee's composition: House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio, Senate President Paul A. Manglona, Saipan Mayor Donald P. Flores, Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz, Rota Mayor Melchor A. Mendiola, and Northern Islands Mayor Ramona Rebuenog. In their roles as policy committee members, they are the only voting members of the MIMC.

At that meeting, the policy committee was briefed on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) as well as updates from the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) and the Guam Advisory Consulting Team (ACT) in regards to the anticipated military buildup.

The committee agreed that it is extremely important for the CNMI government to work together with the Department of Defense (DOD) and the territory of Guam, through the MIMC. Tom Linden, as the MIMC Coordinator, is tasked as the point of contact (POC) for all military related activities with respect to the buildup. All buildup communications should be channeled through his office, which shall communicate with the DOD and the Guam officials.

The MIMC was formed to address the concerns of CNMI residents and to maximize possible economic impacts. "With the strong support of our policy committee members, along with a strong OEA technical support, the MIMC should be able to assist CNMI residents successfully mitigate impacts of the buildup," stated Commerce Secretary Michael Ada.

Fitial is very pleased with the formation of the policy committee and highlighted the importance of bringing the leaders of all the islands together. "This is an opportunity to seek common ground and reach a unified position that will benefit all the residents of the Northern Mariana Islands," said Fitial.

The MIMC is slated to meet again on Feb. 9 to put together a unified comment from its members. The deadline for submission of comments regarding the draft EIS is on Feb. 17, 2010. The public is urged to participate in the comment submission and they may either submit their comments to their respective elected leaders before Feb. 9 or submit them online at the website, www.guambuildupeis.us before Feb. 17. ***(PR)***

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CATHOLIC SCHOOL WEEK 2010

Student profile: Ryan Ortizo

By LOUISE VILLAGOMEZ
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Every year during Catholic Schools Week, Mount Carmel School features profiles of its community such as parents, students, and teachers.

Catholic School Week 2010 features the president of Student Council, Ryan E. Ortizo.

Ortizo is a 17-year-old son of Nero and Myrna Ortizo. Ortizo is not a new face at Mount Carmel School. He is currently a senior and has been attending Mount Carmel School since the first grade. Through his 12 years in Mount Carmel, Ortizo has accomplished many things.

Ortizo

He discovered his passion for public speaking when he joined the Primary Grade Forensic Competition in 2000. From then on, Ortizo continued participating in forensic league competitions, which brought him to several national competitions. As a consistent winner of the local Valentine Sengebau poetry contest and orator of the famous speech of Martin Luther King, Jr. "I Have a Dream", Ortizo also uses his creative talents in our community. He has been a member of the school's Theatre Club since the seventh grade. In Theatre Club's most recent production, *Winter's Tale,* Ortizo played King Leontes, who was one of the lead roles. He is also a member of other organizations such as the National Honor Society, Mock Trial, and the Junior State of America.

As Student Council president, Ortizo has accomplished various activities within the past two quarters of this school year such as the organization of Cultural Day and the Halloween Festival in October, the Christmas Carnival last December, and as emcee for the Christmas Program. Now he's on his way to making Mount Carmel's Student Council affiliated with the National Student Council Organization. He also hopes for the best for this second semester to be the best. He said, "My biggest accomplishment would be helping out the school as STUCO president and being there for the school and the students when they need someone to step up. It's something I definitely enjoy doing."

Apart from keeping up with grades and other activities, during his free time, you would usually find Ortizo in front of his laptop expressing more creativity through poetry, Flash animations, techno music, and much more. He also enjoys spending time with his family and friends.

Ortizo is a student with high spirits and determination to get things done. He is a student who proudly represents Mount Carmel School and continues to stay a true Knight.

HAITI

From Page 1

Moreover, the U.S. Navy Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS *1ST LT Jack Lummus* (T-AK 3011), which ordinarily operates out of Guam/Saipan, is also taking part in the international disaster relief efforts underway in Haiti.

The United Workers Movement-NMI and Pilcowa is set to turn over today to the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter $423 which the groups collected during the Jan. 22 donation drive at the Microl Corp.-Beach Road intersection in San Jose.

Rabby Syed, president of the United Workers Movement-NMI, said they had to cancel the Jan. 29 donation drive because another group of individuals were at the same intersection collecting donations from passing motorists, to go toward a medical referral.

"We thank all those who donated to the Haiti relief efforts," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Docomo Pacific's fundraising continues until Feb. 15. Under its program, Docomo customers will be able to donate funds by texting to 42484 (HAITI) on their Docomo Pacific phones.

By texting to 42484 on their cell phones, Docomo donors will be giving $5 per text to the relief fund. This charge will be deducted from the subscribers' load value for prepaid customers. For postpaid customers, the charge will appear on their bills. Customers may text as many times as they like.

Tan Siu Lin Foundation announced last week that it will match the consolidated amount raised by employees of Tan Holdings affiliate companies in Guam and Saipan by Feb. 5.

"Kindly look into your heart to help the Haitian people. If willing, employees at each affiliate company may come up with raising a monetary contribution that will then be reported to your corresponding human resources office. The final amount will be reported to the Tan Siu Lin Foundation for a matching contribution," the foundation said in a message to Tan Holdings affiliate companies, including *Saipan Tribune*.

All funds raised by Tan Holdings and Tan Siu Lin Foundation in Guam and Saipan will be donated to their respective American Red Cross chapters.

Relief efforts

U.S. Navy Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS 1ST LT *Jack Lummus*, which ordinarily operates out of Guam/Saipan, carried relief cargo to the quake-ravaged Haiti. Without supply from sea, it will be impossible to deliver enough supplies to meet the range of demands in Haiti.

Lummus, according to the U.S. Navy, is designed to carry equipment and supplies to sustain more than 15,000 Marine Expeditionary Brigade personnel for up to 30 days in the event of conflict.

In the wake of the Jan. 12 earthquake in Haiti, however, *Lummus* loaded supplies and equipment from both the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Marine Corps, as well as cargo from other U.S. government agencies.

USAID, for example, provided more than 120 pallets of relief supplies and more than 400 16-ounce bottles of propane.

Besides carrying USAID supplies, Lummus also carried Improved Navy Lighterage System pontoons, an Army Port Opening Battalion, Seabee gear, combat engineers, lots of propane tanks, and 223 troops.

The 673-foot *Lummus* has 165,000 square feet of cargo-carrying capacity, and is ideal for a no-notice mission.

The civilian-crewed ship is owned and operated by the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command (MSC) and ordinarily operates out of Guam/Saipan, according to the U.S. Navy.

Lummus also brought with it Seafix Inc. Lighterage supervisor Harry Brobst and two other Lighterage crew supplied by Seafix to oversee the launching and start up and support of all subject Lighterage craft for the operation, said Seafix Inc. general manager Mark Blackburn.

Seafix Inc. has been the prime contractor to see the daily and maintenance and repairs to *Lummus* and other vessels on Saipan. Seafix is a member of the Ambyth team of transportation and logistics experts established in 1995 to provide steel fabrication, machining, and mechanical repairs for vessels calling at Saipan.

FITIAL

From Page 1

as the special assistant for the Office of Management and Budget.

Unlike Tudela and Sablan, Villagomez does not need Senate confirmations.

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos told *Saipan Tribune* last week that the administration will announce "realignment" and appointments in the next few days.

"There will be some realignment, to try to maximize their (appointees') expertise for efficiency," he said.

When asked how many of the 11 Cabinet members and some 25 other governor's appointees will be retained and replaced, Inos said, "It's a work in progress."

More Cabinet appointments are expected soon as the Fitial and Inos continue to review the performance evaluations of all the departments and agencies, as well as the report submitted by the Transition Committee.

Tudela and Sablan are the first two among 11 Cabinet members to be reappointed or appointed under Fitial's second term in office, and all need the advice and consent of the Senate.

"The Lt. Governor and I are confident that Mr. Santiago F. Tudela's many years of service in the public sector, including his extensive law enforcement experience will be an asset to our administration and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands," Fitial told Senate Pres. Paul A. Manglona in a Jan. 29 letter reappointing Tudela.

Fitial sent Manglona a similar letter appointing Sablan as DPW secretary, a post vacated by Diego Songsong when he stepped down on Jan. 15 to pursue his studies off-island.

Manglona told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that the Senate, especially the Committee on Executive Appointments and Governmental Investigations chaired by Sen. Francisco Q. Cruz (R-Tinian), is ready to work on the confirmation process.

The Senate has 90 days to either confirm or deny a governor's appointee.

Cruz, in a separate interview yesterday, said the committee will not exhaust the 90-day period and would work on the governor's appointments as soon as possible.

"I will call for an EAGI Committee meeting, and members will discuss the appointments submitted. We will then proceed with public hearings and ask for the submission of the required documents. We will do our best to make these hearings as smooth as possible," Cruz told *Saipan Tribune*.

Acting capacities

In a statement on Saturday, the Fitial administration said Tudela and Sablan will serve in acting capacities until confirmed by the Senate.

Villagomez will continue to serve as administrator of the Capital Improvement Projects Office while as she assumes the post of special assistant for the Office of Management and Budget.

Fitial thanked Villagomez for her years of service and performance as the CIP administrator.

"We reaffirm our confidence in your ability to perform satisfactorily in your capacity. We are certain that you will be able to carry out these additional duties and responsibilities capably," Fitial said in a statement.

32 years

In reappointing Tudela as DPS commissioner, Fitial said that he and Inos are pleased with Tudela's performance at the helm of DPS. Tudela has more than 32 years of law enforcement experience.

Fitial and Inos said they have high confidence in Tudela's leadership and management abilities. They are also pleased with Tudela's willingness to continue serving as DPS commissioner.

Tudela previously served as the DPS commissioner under then Governor Juan N. Babauta. In August of 2008, Tudela returned to the top DPS post when Fitial appointed him.

In his 32 years of service, Tudela rose through the ranks as a career law enforcement professional reaching the rank of colonel. Tudela has attended numerous professional development conferences and law enforcement training sessions throughout his career.

Sablan, meanwhile, started serving as acting DPW secretary on Jan. 21, 2010. He is a former executive assistant for the Office of Military Liaison and Veteran's Affairs. Fitial and Inos said Sablan brings a wealth of management experience to DPW.

The administration said it relies on DPW to process federal capital improvement projects in a timely and responsible manner. "We are confident in Mr. Sablan's abilities and are very pleased to have him on board," said Fitial.

NEW ELECTION

From Page 1

ing illegal votes from the election winner under 1 CMC§6606," according to the high court's decision issued by Chief Justice Miguel Demapan, associate justice John Manglona, and justice pro tem Edward Manibusan.

The justice said under the statute, the election must be set aside because the court was unable to determine which candidate received the most legal votes.

The justices in the same opinion, however, affirmed Wiseman's ruling that Rebuenog is a Northern Islands resident and therefore had standing to bring this election contest.

"We further agree with the trial court that Rebuenog is a qualified mayoral candidate," they said.

After the Nov. 7, 2009 election, independent candidate Tobias Dela Cruz Aldan received 68 votes, while Rebuenog, got 67 votes. During the recounting, CEC determined the same result and certified that Aldan indeed won the race.

Last Nov. 12, Rebuenog sued CEC and Aldan. Rebuenog asked the court to declare her as the elected mayor of the Northern Islands because she had the largest number of legal votes cast in the election.

At trial, Aldan, through counsel Robert Torres, argued that Rebuenog was not a qualified mayoral candidate. Wiseman ruled that Aldan did not properly raise this issue, and therefore that under NMI Election Law it did not need to be answered by the court.

Rebuenog appealed.

The Supreme Court ruled that when deciding the election contest the trial court was required to determine whether Rebuenog was a qualified mayoral candidate.

Last Dec. 30, Wiseman declared Rebuenog of the Covenant Party as mayor of the Northern Islands.

Last Jan. 22, Wiseman also declared Rebuenog a qualified mayoral candidate of the Northern Islands.

Wiseman said he finds that Rebuenog has satisfied the residency and domiciliary requirements under a statute that lists out the requirements an individual must satisfy in order to run for mayor of the Northern Islands.

In their opinion on Friday, the justices said they are mindful of the costs and hardships associated with a new election and they recognize the interests of both candidates, as well as all Northern Islands voters, in having an election winner declared as soon as possible.

"However, financial difficulties and expediency concerns, while important, must take a backseat to the right of Northern Islands voters to be represented by a candidate of their choosing," they said.

The justices said by enacting both election statutes (1CM§§6602(b) and 6606) the legislature evinced a clear preference that a new election is preferable to permitting a candidate to assume office when it cannot be known whether he or she received the most legal votes.

"While this Court finds that ordering a new election in this case is the only action consistent with Commonwealth election law, it is the legislature's duty to enact new legislation if it feels a new balance must be struck between election finality, cost concerns, and ensuring that the election winner is the candidate with the most legal votes," the justices said.

They said since they affirm the process that the trial court used to determine illegal voters and illegal votes, there is no need to cause further delay by remanding this matter to the trial court for additional findings.

4 University of Loyola students pass NCLEX

Four University of Loyola students recently passed national licensure examination for registered nurses, pegging the number of those who passed the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) from the school to six.

Wendy Dizon, Linabelle de Venecia, Philip Salud, and Nerissa Inciong all hurdled the NCLEX in their first try in October last year.

Dizon

Inciong

Salud

de Venecia

The four joined the university's first NCLEX passers Rocel Cariaso and Vanessa Tebia who are both now working at Commonwealth Health Center.

In an interview with University of Loyola president and founder Dr. Johnny Fong, he said they are very proud of the accomplishments of their graduates.

"We have known all along that the quality of professors we have, our excellent California-based curriculum and the motivation of our local and foreign students will bring about good NCLEX-RN results," he said, lauding the assistance of the Fitial administration and the Legislature for the university and for the promulgation of new legislation that would allow the university to participate in the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance and CNMI Scholarship programs citing this would help more local students to realize their dream to become a nurse.

"With the influx of more CNMI students, we are committed to bringing this opportunity to more CNMI residents by expanding to Tinian and Rota. Hopefully, we will solve the CNMI nursing crisis in five years," Fong added.

According to Dizon, she went through a four-month rigorous review that included answering over 15,000 NCLEX practice test questions prior to taking the exam.

"I was so happy when I found out that I passed the NCLEX on the first try. I am presently seeking employment in a hospital or clinic in the CNMI or Guam where I can practice my skills as a registered nurse," she said, adding she plans to further her education in nursing to become a certified registered nurse anesthetist.

Dizon described as the most inspiring part of the course was to be acknowledged by the patients during clinical rotations. "It was nice to see the health condition of my patients improve because of the care I've given them. It was also heartwarming whenever my patients would look for my presence and acknowledge the care that I have given them. Knowing that I am able to touch other people's lives gives me a sense of fulfillment," she said.

de Venecia, meantime, described her recent accomplishment as a "great feeling."

"When my computer shut off at the 75th question, I was relieved and anxious at the same time, as I knew that it could mean a passing grade or otherwise. A week after the test when I could no longer wait for the results to be mailed in, I asked a good friend based on Saipan to get them for me. And when we heard the good news, my family went festive," she said.

Salud, for his part, said that besides the hard work, he prayed a lot to get a positive result. The 21-year-old student said he was inspired by family and friends to pursue the nursing field.

"I was so happy upon receiving the letter. I'm planning to apply at CHC to serve the people of the CNMI," shared Inciong, adding that it took her four months to prepare for the examination.

"My family is my inspiration and Karen Buettner," she added.

The University of Loyola offers a two-year associate of science degree in nursing. It caters to local residents and guest workers. ***(Moneth G. Deposa)***

Veteran's outreach in February

To all veterans, their dependents and all concerned: On Feb. 8-12, 2010, Tina San Augustine, the federal Department of Veterans Affairs' public contact and outreach specialist for Guam and the CNMI, will be on Tinian, Rota and Saipan for a Veterans Outreach on veterans' federal benefits. She will be entertaining questions and assist with claims. Date, time and place are as follows:

■ Tinian: Feb. 8, 8am-5pm, at the Tinian Mayor's Office

■ Rota: Feb. 9-10, 9am-4pm, at the Rota Aging Center

■ Saipan: Feb. 11-12, 9am-4pm, at the Office of Military/ Veterans Affairs on Capitol Hill, Building 1364

If you wish to make an appointment or for further information, call Ruth Coleman at the Office of Military/ Veterans Affairs at 664-2650. ***(PR)***

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EYEING SUSTAINED GROWTH IN STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Parents Council, PSS leadership now partners

Capitalizing on the growth of public schools' student performance, the CNMI Public School System leadership saw an ally with the newly formed Parent, Teachers Leadership Council whose partnership is another needed vehicle in meeting PSS' goal of achieving its benchmarks on high student performance.

Although there had been existing parent and teachers groups in all public elementary, junior and senior high schools in the Commonwealth, there remains the need for a cohesive and single agenda from parents to ensure the success of the fifth element of the school system's Strategic Priority PLUS ONE agenda. The Strategic Priority PLUS ONE is embedded within the school districts improvement plan including individual schools' action plan through the accreditation process.

"We want to work with PSS. We want to be the arm of the students to the Public School System," said John Sablan, the president of the newly-created council during last week's meeting with Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan.

Parent Involvement and Community Partnership is one of the five priorities for PSS, and under the Strategic PRIORITY PLUS ONE, the CNMI-PSS leadership and the State Board of Education considers parents and the community as "advocates of student-classroom learning" and must be given focus.

"We are making parent involvement and community partnership with our students our priority," Education Commissioner Sablan pointed out, saying that the school system is also "inviting other groups and organizations" as part of PSS leadership's on-going effort at expanding partnership with the various sectors in the community.

She added, "I am very pleased with the interest that this group is taking on."

In today's leadership meeting, Education Commissioner Sablan will present the PSS-PTA Leadership Council initial plan which would priorities two areas of student learning: 1) administration/leadership, and 2) infrastructure.

PTA Council president Sablan explained that their "choice to address infrastructure and administration" is paramount among other school/student-related issues, saying how students can best motivated if there is a supportive school administration and improved infrastructure.

With the July 2011 deadline for all PSS teaching and non-teaching staff to be highly qualified—by passing both PRAXIS I and II—and the on-going improvement in SAT10 and SBA performance of all students, the CNMI-PSS leadership's hard work continue to pay off with the commitment from the different school administrators and other stakeholders involved.

For school year 2008-2009, SAT 10 results show significant increase in overall student performances in Grades 6 and 11. The findings reveal how the Commonwealth's public schools are performing above the adequately yearly progress target line by 2 percent.

On the other hand, the Standards Based Assessment Results measures the improvement in the core content knowledge and skills of students in mathematics, reading, writing, science, and social students, including the Chamorro and Carolinian Language Heritage Studies.

With more than a year before the July, 2011-five-year deadline for PSS teaching and non-teaching personnel to be PRAXIS passers, PSS' extensive investment in resources for its teachers, counselors and administrators are paying off. As of January, 2010 there are 71 percent or 403 teachers that are now highly-qualified and 29 percent or only 162 that are non-highly qualified.

For personnel, some 69 percent of 431 are PRAXIS passers while 31 percent or 197 have yet to meet the required compliance mandate.

With the greater cooperation between the PSS leadership and the PTA Leadership Council, it is essential to sustain students' learning environment, according to the council president Sablan.

Meanwhile, according to Charlotte Camacho, a member of the PSS leadership representing all public elementary schools, there is already a "25-percent increase" in parental and community participation among public elementary schools. Camacho is also the principal of GTC Elementary School.

A 155-percent increase in parental and community participation was also separately noted on all public junior and senior high schools.

"We do have the numbers now and we are gearing toward the social and academic aspect of student learning through community partnership," Camacho separately said.

And for the council, the challenge remains in getting everyone on board.

"We have to indoctrinate our parents to take advantage with our public schools' programs and the availability of resources to enable our children to learn more," PTA Council president Sablan opined. ***(PR)***

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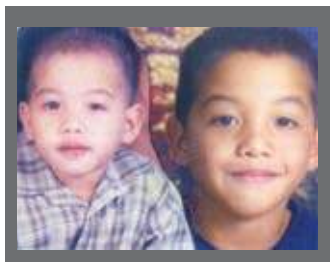


BIRTHDAY WISHES

Happy birthday to Jakrie S.A Songao, who is celebrating his birthday today, Feb. 1. Wishing you good health, happiness, and continued blessing. May the good Lord continue to bless you always! Greeting from grandma Ulang and grandpa Ding, your dad, mom, sister, and all the family.

CONTRIBUTE PHOTO

Joyner to speak to delinquents about staying away from crime

The federal court has allowed convicted drug trafficker Jawn Joyner to speak to youth delinquents about staying away from crime.

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge David Wiseman granted assistant U.S. attorney James Benedetto's recommendation to let Joyner talk to youth delinquents at the Juvenile Detention Center about not going into a life of crime.

Joyner awaits sentencing after pleading guilty Wednesday to three counts of possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute.

The 30-year-old Joyner signed a plea agreement with the U.S. government. Wiseman accepted the guilty plea and set the sentencing for April 27, 2010 at 9am.

According to the charging information, Joyner was found in possession with intent to distribute 0.34 actual grams of "ice" on Sept. 12, 2008; 0.19 actual grams of "ice" on Oct. 8, 2008; and 0.36 actual grams of "ice" on March 17, 2009.

The charges carry a maximum penalty of not more than 20 years in prison, a fine not to exceed $1 million, and three years of supervised release.

Under the plea agreement, the stipulated sentencing guidelines range is 12 to 18 months in prison.

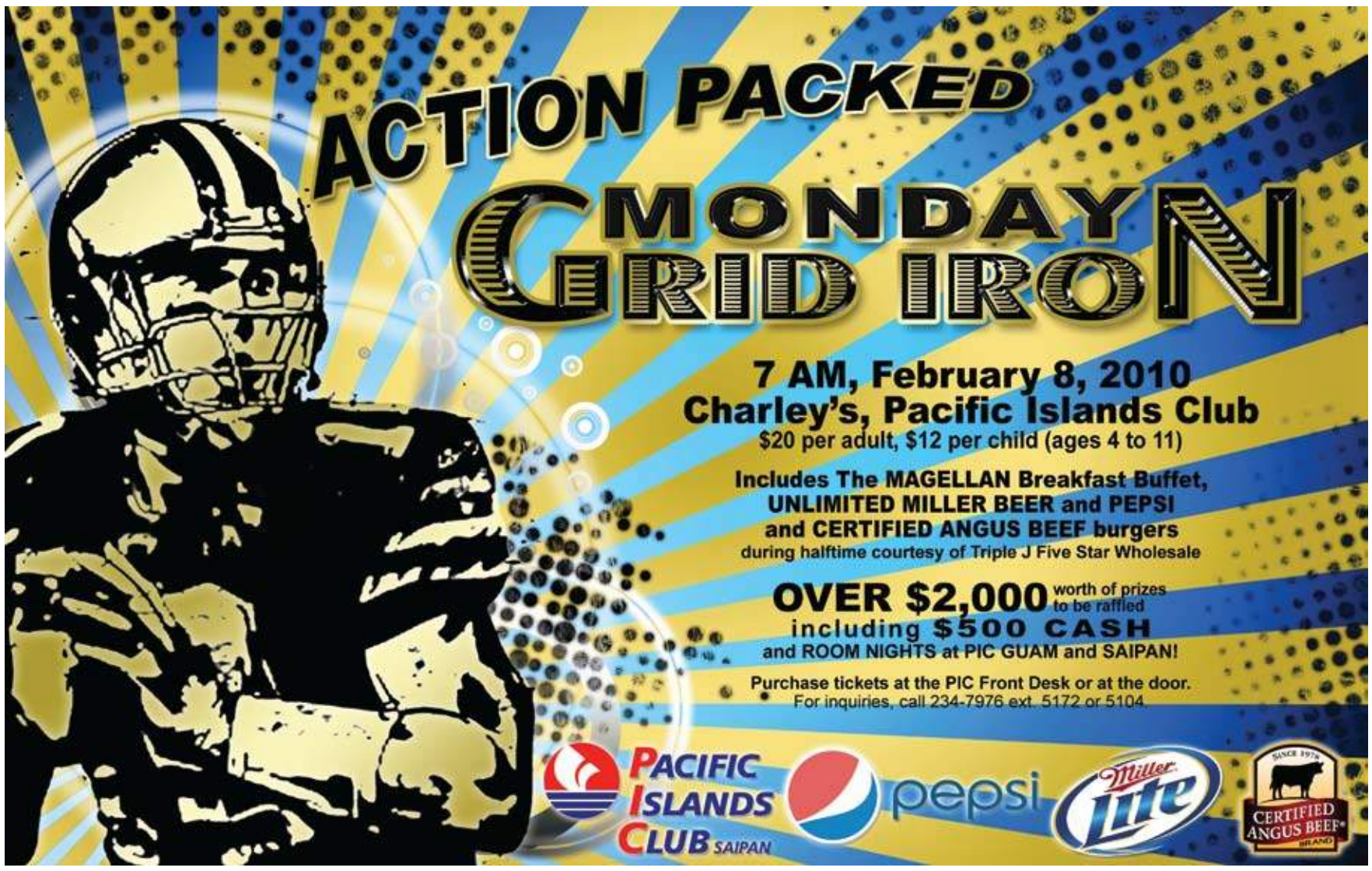
The U.S. government will recommend 12 months.

The agreement also indicated that the applicable fine range is $3,000 to $30,000. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy Birthday Lola Zeny! With all the stress and headaches we're giving you, we hope you continue to look younger than you actually are! Love from your grandkids—JBoy, Aya, Omi, and Quincy.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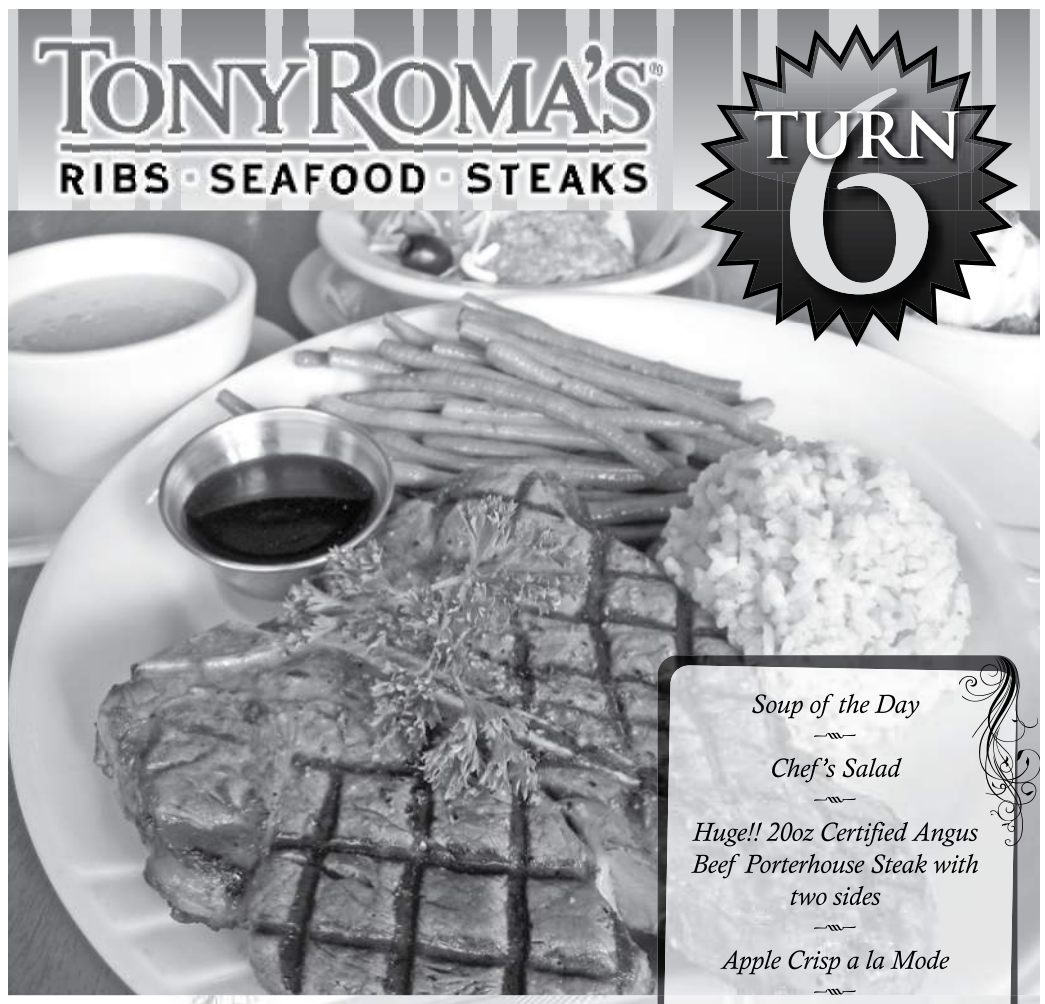
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Rear Adm. Paul Bushong to assume command of Joint Region Marianas

SANTA RITA, Guam—Rear Adm. Douglass T. Biesel will be relieved by Rear Adm. Paul J. Bushong during a change of command ceremony that has not yet been scheduled.

Biesel will serve as commander, Navy Region Northwest, Silverdale, Wash. He is returning to a familiar duty station, since he was the commanding officer of Naval Base Kitsap, Bremerton, Wash.

Bushong

Bushong will serve as commander, Joint Region Marianas, U.S. Defense Representative Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau/ Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Marianas based in Guam, an area with which he is familiar.

Bushong is currently serving as commander, Submarine Group Two, Groton, Conn. He has served as commanding officer of USS Frank Cable (AS 40), homeported in Apra Harbor, Guam and in other assignments on submarines based in the Pacific. ***(PR)***

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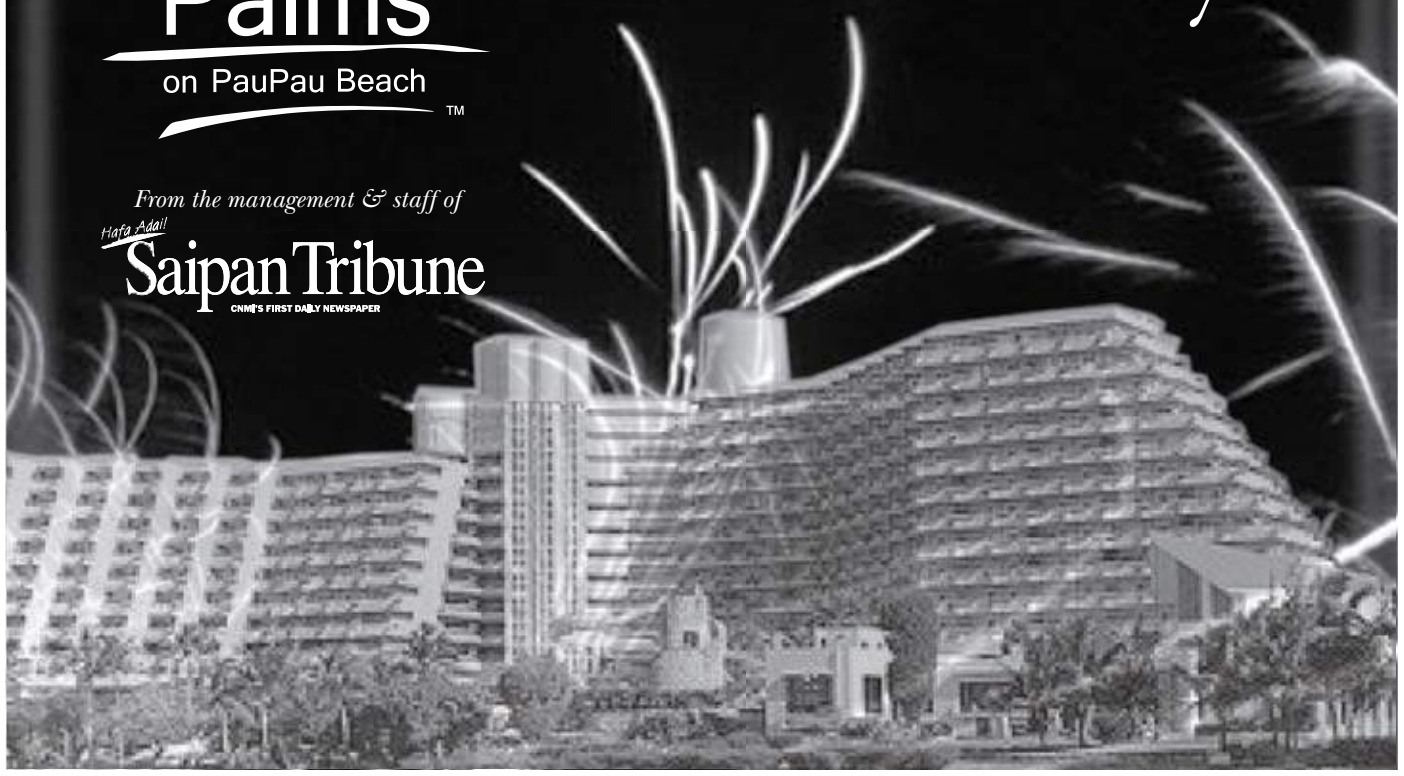

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Feb. 1, 1999

CUC names Kansas firm to review bids

After a four-month search, the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation finally has hired an independent engineering firm to re-evaluate all proposals submitted by 13 companies for the new 80-megawatt power plant on Saipan that has come under a storm of protests, officials said. Burns & McDonnell, based in Kansas City, Missouri, has signed an agreement with the government-owned utility firm to conduct another round of review and determine the best offer, according to a CUC statement. The firm will receive more than $49,000 in payment for its services, but will have an option to handle final negotiations on the $120 million project if the CUC board decides to hire them for the second round of deliberation.

Panel to resume fund mess probe

The House committee on Health, Education and Welfare will resume its oversight hearing on the Northern Marianas College on Wednesday amid warning from government officials of deeper financial crisis facing CNMI's lone higher learning institution. The hearing, to be held on February 3 at the House chamber, is expected to investigate into allegations of mismanagement of NMC funds as well as the scholarship program that drew flak at the start of the oversight last Thursday. Testifying before the House panel, several government officials also underscored a recurring budget shortfall that has dogged the state college for the past few years and aggravated by the shrinking public revenues.

Feb. 1, 2010

Senate still weighing power plant probe

The Senate is set to decide this week whether bribery allegations leveled against Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Executive Director Timothy P. Villagomez warrant a full-scale investigation even as some senators reacted mildly on Sen. Ramon S. Guerrero's move. Executive Appointments and Governmental Investigations Committee Chair Sen. Joaquin G. Adriano will meet on Thursday with members of the panel to discuss the possibility of investigating the purported affidavit that claimed wrongdoing by Mr. Villagomez on the controversial Saipan power project. "This is not an oversight. This is just a complaint the committee will look into," he told reporters after the joint legislative session yesterday at the Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center. "The committee will not shrink to investigate any angle to that complaint."

Ex-Speaker defends travel expenses

Their travel expenditures have gone up as members of the Legislature made several trips to Washington D.C. to attend oversight hearings conducted by the U.S. Congress as well as to meet with lawmakers and their staff. This was the response of Rep. Diego T. Benavente to a report from the Department of Finance citing a 56 percent increase in travel expenditures by the legislative branch last year compared to its 1997 spending despite the austerity measures implemented by the government. About $704,578 in taxpayers' dollars were spent by members of the 11th Legislature in FY 99 for their off-island trips, up 56 percent from $454,988 two years prior to that. In contrast, the executive branch cut its travel expenditures by 73 percent, from $2.84 million to $1.47 million during the same period.

Feb. 1, 2001

CUC to cut power of 40 gov't offices

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation yesterday started sending out disconnection notices to more than 40 government agencies due to the government's failure to settle utility debts amounting to over $12 million. Citing the strain caused by CUC financial setback and operational costs, CUC Executive Director Timothy P. Villagomez underscored that government offices won't receive special treatment and utilities services will be disconnected should they continuously refuse to recognize the notices. In the next 29 days, CUC will strictly implement its disconnection procedure to prevent disruption of services to paying sectors like home-owners and other businesses.

2 new investors for shooting resorts

Rota and Tinian's economy stand to benefit should the CNMI Legislature approve pending legislative measure that will pave the road for the establishment of shooting resorts on the two islands. CNMI International Shooting Resort and another company headed by Korean businessman Kim Joohee are ready to infuse millions of funds once Sen. Edward Maratita's bill got the approval of both the House and the Senate.

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Opinion

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EDITORIAL

US should do what Iran fears most

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama promised last year that if Iran did not respond to offers of high-level "engagement" with the United States and negotiations on its nuclear program, he would seek international support for "crippling" sanctions against the regime. Tehran did not respond, and true to its word, the administration has been engaged in a vigorous-looking diplomatic effort this month to win agreement on a new resolution by the U.N. Security Council. From the outside, the results of its talks this far with China and Russia, the keys to such a vote, have looked mixed at best: China, in particular, has been public about its recalcitrance. Yet administration officials continue to express optimism that they will be able to bring tough new sanctions to bear.

We hope that's the case. Yet any new measures are likely to take months to approve and implement, and Iran has shrugged off the three previous Security Council sanctions resolutions. In the meantime, the administration is still dodging a larger question: whether Obama's two-track strategy needs to be overhauled in light of the unprecedented and increasingly radical opposition the Islamic regime is facing from its own people.

Many experts outside the administration, and many in Congress, think it does. The hardline clique that has emerged around Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, they say, has lost legitimacy, and in any case is composed of those elements most opposed to accord with the West. The best chance of preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear capacity lies in a victory by the opposition—and so it follows that the Obama administration's strategy should be aimed at bolstering the self-styled "green movement" rather than striking deals with the Khamenei regime.

To his credit, Obama has spoken out with increasing forcefulness against the regime's crackdown on the opposition, and many of the sanctions the administration is promoting center on the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, which is both the sponsor of the nuclear program and the backbone of Khamenei's remaining support. But the president's advisers say he is sticking to a regime-centered approach. Obama's offer of engagement and recognition of the Islamic republic, they contend, helped produce the domestic political crisis; so more offers of accord could create still more pressure.

The problem with this strategy is that it keeps the administration focused on the least likely scenario for success—a deal with the current regime—instead of the more likely one, which is an opposition victory. It could cause the administration to take steps that undermine the green movement, such as conducting more negotiations with the government, while failing to do that which could tip the balance of power to the opposition. The latter would include more support for independent broadcasting into the country, and funding for groups that can help the opposition circumvent Iran's Internet firewall. Obama himself might make a difference by speaking out more forcefully and more often in support of Iranians' right to free speech, free assembly and justice for those who have been killed or imprisoned.

The regime professes unconcern about another round of sanctions—perhaps with some reason. But it does not hide its terror and paranoia about the possibility that the United States would help to sponsor a popular "color revolution." If the object of sanctions is to punish the regime and force it to make concessions, why not begin to do what it fears most?

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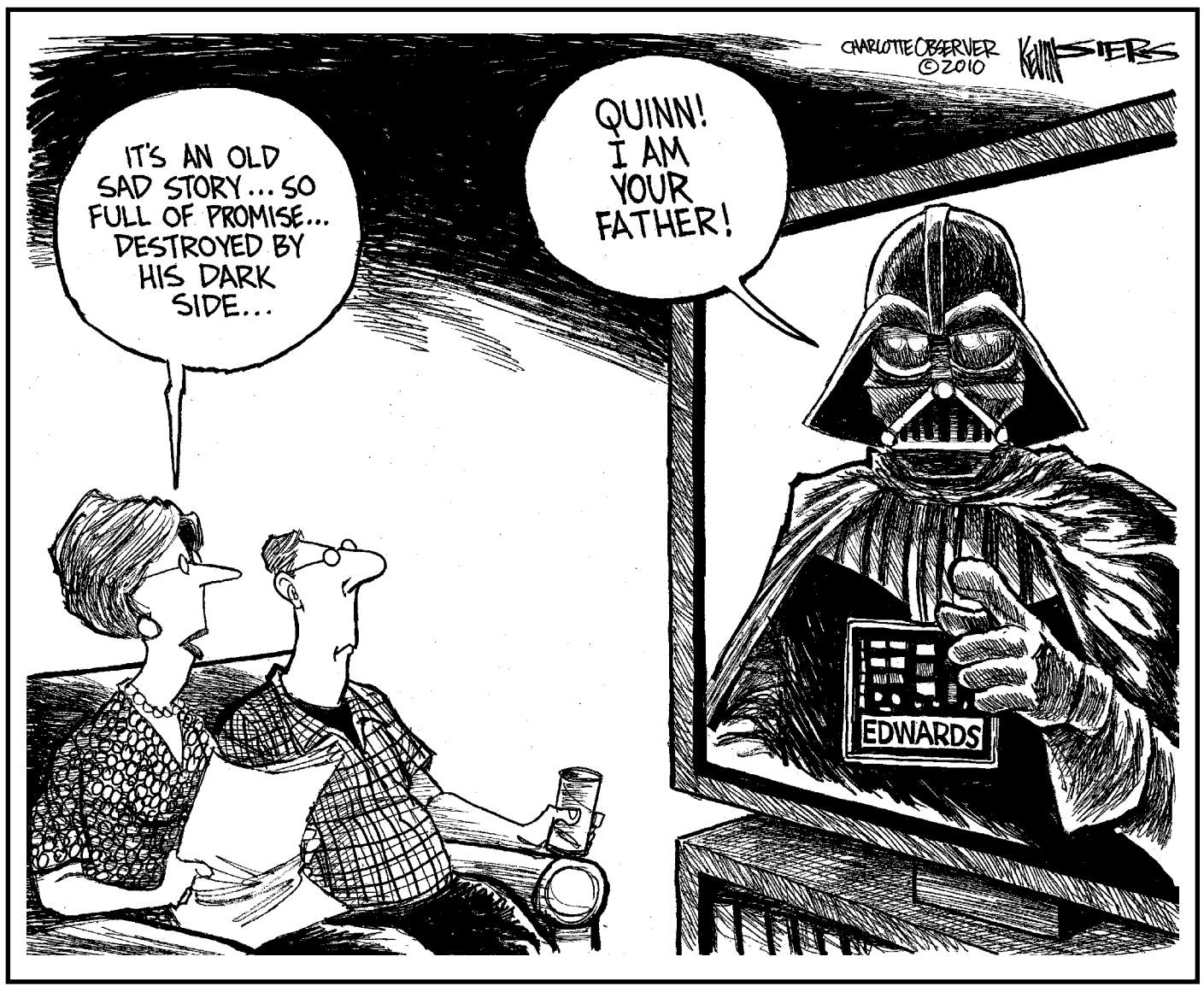
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EDWARDS

Spending freeze move shows how Obama lost the argument

By EZRA KLEIN
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WASHINGTON—Few are as good at delivering a high-stakes speech as President Obama, something he proved again in last Wednesday's State of the Union. The speech, which focused on jobs and the economy, was feisty, confident and—rare for presidential addresses—funny. The insta-poll numbers were great. Joe Klein called it "Obama at his best." It was so good, in fact, that virtually nobody noticed that Obama had already lost the argument.

The tell came a few days before, when the White House proposed a—deep breath here—non-security discretionary spending freeze. The inelegantly titled policy halts spending growth in a category that accounts for 13 percent of the federal budget. From the perspective of long-term deficits, that spending—much less its growth over three years—is insignificant.

A spending freeze might be what Americans envision when they think about deficit reduction. The only problem is, it won't do much to reduce the deficit. As the Economist pointed out, "Mr. Obama has apparently concluded that the electorate can't be expected to handle anything like a real description of the tough decisions which must be made."

It wasn't always thus. The administration's first year was premised on two very difficult, very counterintuitive and very important economic arguments. The first was that the deficit problem is a function of health-care spending. The second was that the government's role in a recession is to spend, and to spend hard. The rhetoric and policy of the past week were proof that Americans have not been convinced.

"Our health-care problem is our deficit problem," Obama said in September. "Nothing else even comes close." He's right. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities made the point clearly in a recent report on the budget outlook. The whole game, they wrote, is Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. "Growth in those programs accounts for all of the increase in federal spending as a share of GDP over the next 40 years," they said. Total spending for everything else, from agriculture to education to missile technology, is predicted to grow more slowly than the economy.

The spending freeze exempts entitlement programs. That is: It's focusing on the part of the budget that's not a problem. Social Security, meanwhile, is on a perfectly manageable trajectory. It's Medicare and Medicaid—whose rate of spending is driven by the rest of the health-care system—that break the budget. That's why health-care reform was so important to former Congressional Budget Office director Peter Orszag, and why the administration pushed so hard for a deficit-improving bill that included an independent Medicare Commission empowered to control Medicare costs.

But the effort was wasted, at least from a public relations perspective. A January poll conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that 60 percent of Americans thought the health-care reform bill would increase the deficit, and only 15 percent thought it would reduce it. The presidential speeches, the Congressional Budget Office's estimates, the letters signed by dozens of leading economists—none of it had worked.

The story on the stimulus is similarly depressing. At its base, the stimulus is Keynesian economics in practice. A recession hits, and individuals and businesses become scared that they're next on the chopping block, so they stop spending and start saving to protect themselves from the hard times to come. That drains demand from the economy, and without demand, the hard times get even harder. Government is the only player able to disrupt this vicious cycle. By sharply increasing its spending, it can generate demand, improving the economy until individuals and businesses are comfortable reentering the marketplace.

Key to this whole theory is that the government should act "counter-cyclically": In good times, it should save and store, and in bad times, it should spend and borrow. The exact opposite holds true for businesses and individuals, which makes the whole project pretty unintuitive.

Students in macroeconomics classes learn all this in the first week of September. After a year of trying to explain it to an economically distressed nation, however, Obama basically gave up. Instead, he bowed before the entrenched, incorrect, conventional wisdom. "Families across the country are tightening their belts and making tough decisions," he said. "The federal government should do the same."

Well, no. It shouldn't. The government should not tighten its belt until the people can loosen theirs. That's why the stimulus was a good idea, and why Obama is asking Congress for another stimulus, although this one's being called a "jobs bill." But the stimulus proved almost impossible to explain, and it was far too small, given the size of the recession. As a result, people are very worried about jobs, and they're very worried about deficits, and instead of trying to convince them that deficits make good sense until job growth is back to normal, the administration is trying to appease those fears so it can get on with the rest of its agenda.

See SPENDING on Next Page

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Beijing 2010

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section.*

Beijing 2008 was the Summer Olympics. Beijing 2009 was the 60th anniversary of the People's Republic of China. It is Shanghai's turn for its 2010 Expo. For the CNMI, and for me, Beijing 2010 came this Friday with the launching of the direct flight between Beijing and Saipan.

A chartered Air China 340-seater Boeing 777 brought in some 320 passengers, presumably, to get away from the chilly breeze currently edging the icy winds from the Mongolian steppes, a radical change from Celsius 0 to 26. Foolish me, of course, did the reverse. I lived in Saskatchewan, Canada for a couple of years when the body calcium was still firm on the lower extremities, so I do have some familiarity with cold but to brave Manchurian winter, my final destination in the winter of one's years, has to be a bona fide *shen jing ping (*crazy*),* the favored term for "nutty case" liberally used and frequently heard from our Zhong Guo population in Saipan.

Those who were not tuned in to the Beijing Summer Olympics would do well to get a copy of the spectacular opening and closing events orchestrated no less than Zhang Yimou, the famous film director of such acclaimed films as *The life of Gui Ju* (with Gong Li)*, The Road home* (with Zhang Ziyi)*,* and *Hero* (with Jet Li). I got my DVD set from L & F Outlet on Beach Rd., in Chalan Kanoa for an outrageous bargain price of $10. Of course, this was the domestic version sans subtitles, but the absence of translation makes one focus on the cinematography and the original audio recording, making the presentation more impressive and awesome.

Yimou returned last year to direct the 60th Anniversary of National Day. $5 will get you a DVD copy at L & F Outlet, as well. To claim that a precision marching platoon of women military personnel can overtly display an exuberance of pleasing female pulchritude would normally be an oxymoron. Not in this case. Orchestrated at a time when the world economy was experiencing a global recession, China's confidence and continuing annual 8 percent growth rate was clearly evident in the theme of the parade past Tiananmen Square. Again, and not to be overly one-tracked mind here, the skirted ladies show of confidence and in cadence were just marvelous!

Alighting passengers from CA8282 were clearly established adults and professionals from my view in the Ada International Airport waiting lounge. We are not talking of unconventional young rap music lovers on the fringe or the lower end of the economic scale as those sometimes coming from Asian developed and developing countries, nor rock punks of dyed hairdos, nor countryside risk takers coming over with the one investment of their life to find a niche "in America" by all means necessary. The passengers looked like they had just left an operation's meeting of their corporation or public agency executive committee, and had come to either scout prospective new areas of investments or engagement, or personally relax under more pleasant clime. They did not look like they had come to run away from home!

Ninety-four percent occupancy of an inaugural flight is nothing to sneer at, given the low profile of the flight undertaken by the uncertain operations of new immigration overseers from Homeland Security against the heretofore, rather relaxed Marianas treatment of visitors from China and Russia. But paradise has gotten the fear and frenzy bug of prospective and possible terrorist and suddenly, the ¥uan and the Rubles has taken a back seat from the budding relationship between these geographical neighbors.

The five-hour turnaround flight had only 14 passengers on the return flight. One turned out to be an old acquaintance, a nurse from Shenyang, heading home for the lunar New Year can never be a modest enterprise. With China's 40-day Spring break starting mid-February, China is on the move, a welcome economic stimulus on its domestic market.

The five-hour turnaround flight had only 14 passengers on the return flight. One turned out to be an old acquaintance, a nurse from Shenyang, heading home for the lunar New Year can never be a modest enterprise. With China's 40-day Spring break starting mid-February, China is on the move, a welcome economic stimulus on its domestic market.

As Shenyang ladies number more than a few among the ladies of the night in Saipan, we had on board as well one who had given up on the current slow night life, and along with her friend from Tsingtao, has finally called it quits. The Tsingtao girl had met me at a law office where I had assisted labor and immigration cases clients. She reminded me of it and was surprised to see a non-Chinese on this lonely all Chinese flight to Beijing. The Shenyang girl is returning after four months of sojourn in the island that was reputed to pass out American Green Cards after Nov. 28.

When I had heard of that promotional line in May I did not think anyone would actually fall for it. When I saw one of the sponsoring names for temporary visitor's permit to be a prominent political name, I could only sigh with "What a Commonwealth! What a country!"

The Tsingtao girl's story, of course, is a common and familiar one. She had paid a fortune to join the throng of contracted garment factory workers a decade earlier, only to discover that the roads of Saipan are not paved with gold, nor are the factories accounting of overtime pay half worker-friendly. She segued into another work after her *dagan* had turned unattractively dark for sitting too long on a hard seat in a factory line. Sadly, she had nothing to show for her darkened butts but harbor deep regrets for the 10 years of residency she had in an island that used her on her heine thoroughly but not always well. She decided to go home after a friend in the flesh trade got caught trying to slip into Guam.

We will not belabor the obvious. An almost empty return flight does not a good business sense make. How can a one-way trade be sustained especially if the primary calling card is simply getting to draw a card on a felt covered table, an act that can be done with more glitter and bizzazz in Macau? And what in China is worth visiting that return flights might have more travelers than the returning residents who have exhausted ways and reason to stay back in Uncle Ben's shores? More reflections on Beijing and China's Northeast coming up within the next 30 days.

Direchun Representasion

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

DelRosario is the secretary of the Department of Public Works

Gi mapus na semana, `nos kuantus senadot iya Guam maapagat seriosamiente si Delegadu Madeleine Bordallo pot modun representasion giya Washington. Era sessu si Bordallo ha sañgane senadot siha na muñga kinentra gi planun para uma`adelanta fasilidat militat giya Guam.

Umafagcha este na sentimientu `nai i lehislatura ha apprueba un` resulasion ha fafaisen i gobietnon federat na muñga ma-usa machuli tanu natibu gi papa fuetsan mafananaan "eminent domain". Dimas de este na chalan, mas mauleg u guaha negosiu entalu mangai tanu yan militat.

I senadot siha makomprende lokue sentimientun tautau niha ni kumuestotona usun tanu natibu para nesesidat militat. Guaha gi este siha na tanu man-sagradu. Guaha hagas lugat natibu siha `nai makondudukta antigusu na serimoñas tautau tanu. Taya ginagau niniha i para umarespeta ennau siha na lugat.

Mas lokue oppan finaisen natibu pot planun mamueban 80,000 na sindalu yan familian niha ginen Okinawa para Guam. Dañkulu i numeru ya todu kinalamten tautau u fan inafekta deste fasilidat hospitat, eskuela, numerun kareta, yan otru siha attikulu `nai pineñga i kualidat linala natibu.

Lau i intension Señora Bordallo gaige gi appottunidat Guam umadelanta ekonomiaña ginen este na planu. Ayu mafafaisen ni senadot siha: Kau Guam s Bordallo ha represesenta pat representanten iya Washington para Guam? Este na kuestion mapisu gi kabales kinemprenden senadot siha na tautau niha lokue marepresesenta gi kuetpun lehislaturan iya Guam.

Ha tutuhon tumeug i asuntu `nai sige natibu siha man-mamaisen dichu kuestion pot aminasun kualidat linala niha yangin mas megai sindalu gi tanu. Matuñgu na maseha hafa na sentimientu ma-ekspressia, kanaha ti oppan fino niha sa` gi uttimu besis i militat solu para u famatinas disision.

Klaru gi estorian lugat siha giya Pasifiku na i militat todu i tiempu ha chuchule i mas man-mauleg siha na tanu para usuña dehemunus kau sagradu pat ti sagradu i lugat. Estague umatitisa diniskontentun natibu `nai sumen taya` respetu gi sagradu siha na tano`ña ni hagas respetau deste antigu na tiempu.

Si Gobietnu Felix Camach ha tugi`i i depattamenton Navy na mampus chadeg planun adelantun militat ya debi u maditeni dididi para u guaha kabales na areglu gi matransferin 80-mit na tautau gi uuttimun 2014 na sakan. Este na planu ti ninae` iya Guam kampu pot preparasion. Megai mas asuntu mañgahulu gi hunta siha ni man-makondudukta, lehitimu na asuntu `nai debi u guaha kabales ineppe ginen militat.

Petsonamiente, lehitimu i man-mafafaisen siha na kuestion. Hu nanae` saludu si Senadot BJ Cruz pot kalagtus siha na kuestioña gi planun militat . Sen mas Si Yuus Maase`!

SPENDING

From Page 10

But it means that Obama has more to fear than the 60-vote Senate or the cowering Democrats in the legislature. Obama is no slouch as a communicator, and the raw material of the recession and the long-term deficit were plenty dramatic. This was as teachable a moment as American politics can be expected to offer, but few took the lesson, which has made it difficult for the Obama administration to pass policies based on those arguments.

Changing minds is very hard. But if you can't do it, changing policies is even harder.

Letters to the Editor

Can't live with, and can't live without

Oh how I am displaced within my own heart! Tormented for I know that I am a U.S. citizen and yet I couldn't really be determined in my heart where I stand as one. I want to be a Chamorro, but being an American is so complicated yet I have to be both whether or not because I do not have any choice?

History can come to aid in my deliberation. Do I learn to live in my infancy, or be guided by one of greater stature than I? Let me put the CNMI here, and America there, with an umbilical cord in between that holds them together. Now picturing America and the CNMI in that imaginary womb; I ask myself as a Chamorro in the CNMI, when will the time be to cut that umbilical cord and who would do it for me in my state of infancy?

In this imaginary womb, it has to be America as the mother being for she is of greater stature than the CNMI in all practical sense of the word. Oh mother America we beseech you then to enrich yourself with sustenance that can foster and prosper your infant child, the CNMI. Talk to the CNMI in your belly, sing to your child in your stomach, pray for her to God our father, and hope for that day when you will deliver her out of your womb so she (CNMI) can grow and continue your heritage.

In real motherhood, it takes nine (9) months, but in this imaginary motherhood, it can take up to a life-time. So take your time mother America, and be patient child CNMI. Hold on to each other and do not allow abortion if life is hard. Believe in God who makes all things work for good and trust that although the birth pang is expected, he will deliver you both, America, and the CNMI. Be firm because although it seems that we can't live with each other, and can't live without each other, we have a God that can make all things possible for his own praise. Haifa Adai, Tirow.

Alexandro Sablan
Dandan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.
▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Cloudy	▲84	▼74
Palau	Showers	▲86	▼78
Yap	Rain	▲86	▼76
Chuuk	Partly Sunny	▲89	▼81
Pohnpei	Showers	▲83	▼74
Kosrae	Showers	▲86	▼75
Majuro	Showers	▲85	▼75

Around The Globe

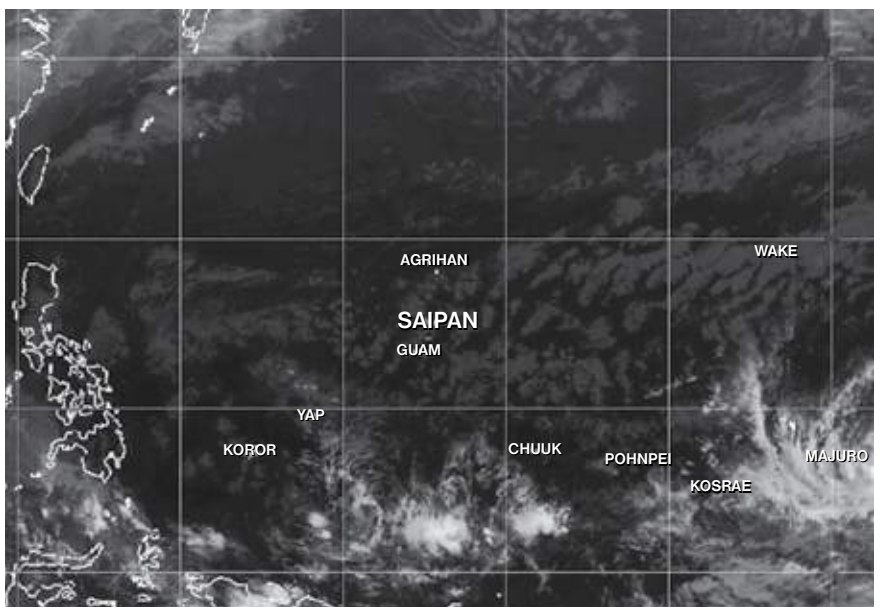
Auckland	Cloudy	▲73	▼59
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	▲31	▼17
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	▲80	▼65
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲76	▼65
London	Cloudy	▲38	▼37
Los Angeles	Partly Sunny	▲64	▼50
Manila	Sunny	▲88	▼73
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	▲74	▼60
Miami	Cloudy	▲77	▼68
New York	Partly Sunny	▲35	▼26
Osaka	Showers	▲48	▼31
Paris	Snow	▲37	▼34
Pusan	Cloudy	▲50	▼29
Rome	Showers	▲46	▼22
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲50	▼37
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲57	▼46
Seoul	Cloudy	▲33	▼15
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲42	▼32
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲41	▼25

Tides

Saipan Harbor

3:03 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.5 Feet
9:40 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.2 Feet
3:36 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.7 Feet
8:55 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line enters the discussion area east of Minami Tori Shima at 25N164E and extends southwestward to near Guam at 13N145E then continues westward to end at 13N130E. Patchy clouds with light showers are found along and up to 200 miles north of the shear line. A near-equatorial trough reaches eastward from EQ152E through a weak circulation near Tarawa Atoll at 2N175E to beyond 180 at 2N. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring near the circulation over Kosrae and Tarawa Atoll but south of Majuro between 2N and 6N from 162E to 180. Trade-wind convergence is combining with favorable upper-level winds to trigger scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Chuuk between 2N and 4N from 147E to 154E and southeast of Yap between 2N and 5N from 140E to 145E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Tuesday	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:16 PM
Thursday	6:46 AM	6:16 PM
Friday	6:45 AM	6:17 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	8:20 PM	8:03 AM
Tuesday	9:19 PM	8:47 AM
Wednesday	10:16 PM	9:30 AM
Thursday	11:13 PM	10:13 AM
Friday		10:58 AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 28, 2010

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW287	6:00am	7:30pm	Daily via NRT
NW638	8:00am	10:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW297	4:45pm	7:30pm	Daily
NW289	5:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am	
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

CA8282	3:15am	7:00am	1, 5

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 4, 5, 7 via PUS
C09603/893	3:15pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via GUM-PALAU
OZ606/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7 via ICN
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW288	12:05pm	1:35am+1	Daily via NRT effective Jan 25
NW277	8:30pm	1:00am+1	3, 6
NW639	9:00pm	1:35am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW290	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
NW298	10:05am	2:50pm	Daily
NW288	9:00pm	1:35am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm	
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

CA8281	6:40pm	1:55am+1	4, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ716/605	12:30am	2:20pm	4, 6 via ICN
OZ706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via PUS
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0892/9596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	3,5 via PALAU-GUM
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2 ,4 ,6, 7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4 ,6 ,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CA: China Airlines; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Alcantara wins WSR spelling bee, advances to Guam competition

Sixth grader Mikhail T. Alcantara advanced to the Guam Scripps Spelling Bee after winning this year's spelling tilt at William S. Reyes Elementary School.

Alcantara bested over 40 other contenders, including runner-up Masrur Alam in the final round held last Jan. 26.

Eleven-year-old Alcantara is the only son of Ligaya and Jerry Alcantara. He will represent WSR in the Guam competition this March.

It will be Alcantara's fourth trip to the contest. He was WSR's spelling champion during his third grade and runner-up honors in his fourth and fifth grades.

With the help of his teacher, coaches, and mother, the sixth grader emerged this year's overall winner after three weeks of preparation.

He spent an hour each night to review for the contest.

Alcantara

Alam

"I am so happy because I made my parents proud of me. I thank my mom for her patience in helping me each night [for this competition]," he said.

Alcantara wants to become a lawyer and a doctor when he grows up. He is convinced that involvement in such school activities and competitions would develop his personality and enhance his knowledge as a student.

In his trip to Guam this year, he and runner-up Alam will be escorted by sixth grade spelling coordinator, Anthony Taylor.

"I am going to study the origins [of words] and I will make sure that I know everything before I get to go to Guam. I want to at least reach up to the third round of the competition and I will do my best to make it happen," the student said.

Alcantara successfully spelled all eight words in the intense championship round last Tuesday.

This year's runner up winner was WSR's last year's champion who also competed in the Guam contest.

According to Claire Barcinas, one of the contest's coordinators, an estimated 50 students from third to sixth grade participated in the five rounds of the competition.

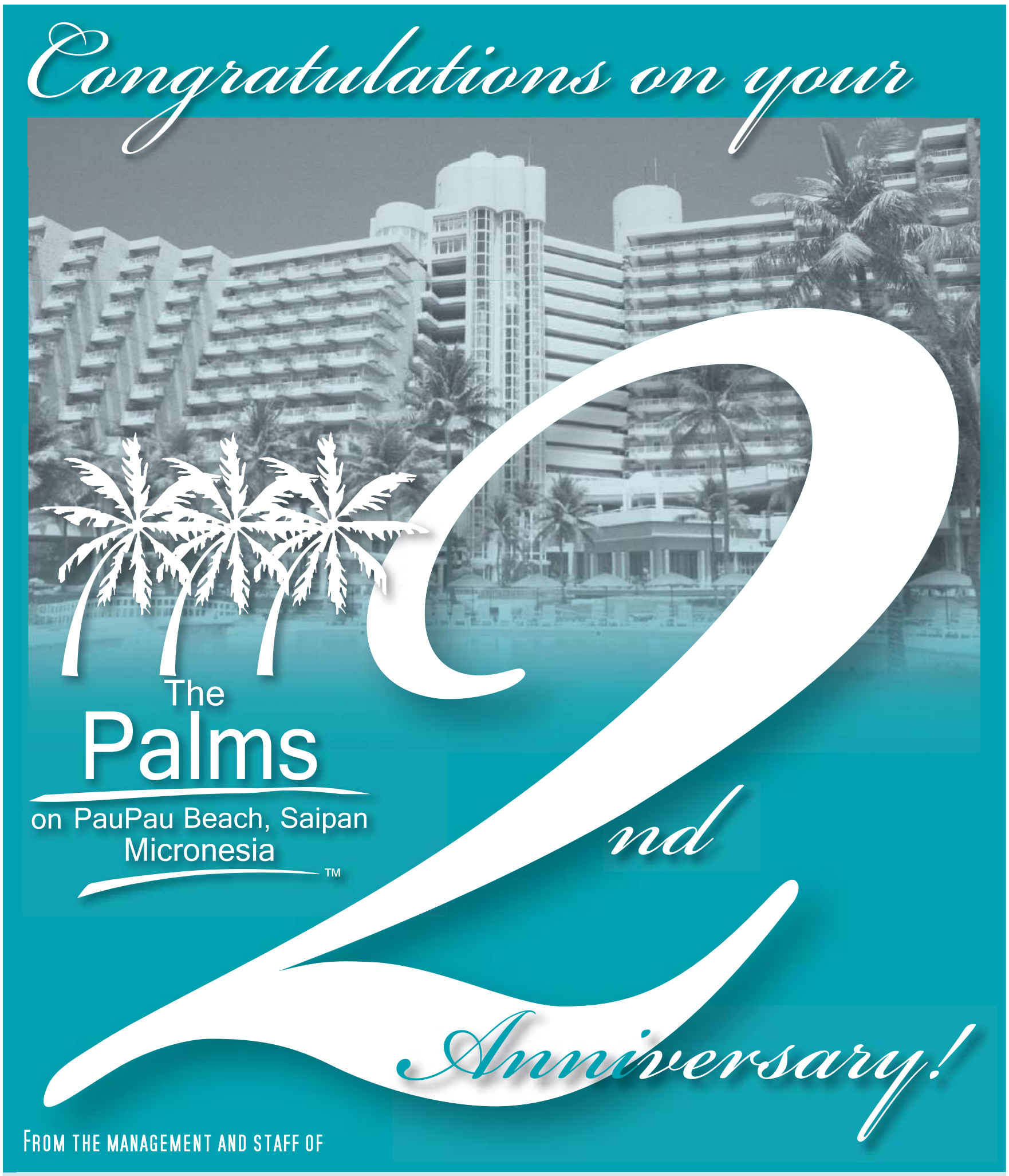
Since December, the school started the preliminary rounds that selected the most number of winnings for the last two rounds.

The contest had three categories—easy, medium, and hard.

"We're giving them tips and a lot of motivation and encouragement to keep on studying the updated 2010 spelling bee words. We also provided them a packet for the contest, spelling rules and we advised them to study the dictionary," Barcinas said, adding that they're expecting the students to continue their best and whether they win or loss in the competition, the two already done a great job in representing WSR.

"We're very proud of them and we're very confident that as long as they do their best they can make," Barcinas said.

Other coordinators of the event included sixth grade teachers Melissa Dickinson and Jude Loste. ***(Moneth G. Deposa)***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PIC donates $10,500 for NMC scholarships

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pacific Islands Club general manager Kiernan Daly, third from left, presents Northern Marianas College interim president, Lorraine Cabrera, second from left, with a $10,500 check donation that will provide scholarships to NMC students as NMC Financial Aid Officer Daisy Manglona-Propst, left, and PIC Human Resources Director Angela Santos, right, look on.

As part of its commitment to expand higher education opportunities for CNMI students, the Pacific Islands Club recently announced that it is donating $10,500 to establish a scholarship program for Northern Marianas College students.

"For many years, the Pacific Islands Club has been a strong partner of the college and has always been generous with their contributions to our students," NMC interim president Lorraine Cabrera said. "This donation will go a long way in helping students achieve their educational goals."

The PIC Saipan scholarship program aims to: (1) promote higher education by providing financial assistance for college students in their pursuit of professional careers; (2) to help alleviate the critical current and future shortage of skilled and trained workforce for the CNMI; and (3) to provide current public and private sector employees with opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills, and enhance their career and professional development.

The scholarship program will award seven $1,500 scholarships to full-time NMC students who are pursuing a degree in business, criminal justice, nursing, education, natural resource management, liberal arts, or hospitality management. The scholarships will be awarded based on merit, eligibility, content of a written essay, and interview process.

PIC Saipan general manager Kieran Daly hopes the donation will attract more students to pursue their degrees at NMC.

"We are proud to help the Northern Marianas College advance its mission of helping our students improve their quality of life by advancing their educational and professional development," said Daly.

To be eligible for the scholarship, applicants must be U.S. citizens (or green card holders) and a CNMI resident for the past three years; be accepted and enrolled as a full-time student at NMC; have a high school or college cumulative GPA of 2.00 or better; be seeking an NMC degree as specified in the guidelines above in the academic semester in which the scholarship is being awarded; applicant must also sign an agreement stating that he or she will work in the Commonwealth after graduating from the NMC for a period twice as long as the period for which applicant received the PIC Saipan Scholarship.

For more information or to obtain an application package, visit the NMC Financial Aid Office, or log on to www.nmc-net.edu. ***(PR)***

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP10-GOV-038

A&E of Puerto Rico Transmission and Distribution

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, through the CNMI Water Task Force, are soliciting sealed Proposals from licensed architectural and engineering (A&E) firms for the Design of Puerto Rico Transmission and Distribution, Puerto Rico, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project Scope of Work will be available at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, on or after **January 11,2010**.

All questions concerning this proposal shall be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 pm, **January 25, 2010**, to Pedro Sasamoto, WTF Program Manager (facsimile) number (670) 664-2279.

This project is funded by a grant from the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA), Department of the Interior. Award of this project is contingent upon receipt of project approval from OIA.

The proposal procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 70-30.3-305. Preference per Public Law 15-95 as further amended by Public Law 15-118 is not available in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal granting the funds for this project.

Proposals must be sealed and marked **"A&E of Puerto Rico Transmission and Distribution, RFP10-GOV-038".** One (I) original and four (4) copies of sealed proposals must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 2:00 p.m. (CNMI local time), on February 10, 2010. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

The CNMI reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any imperfections in any proposal if to do so shall be in the best interests of the CNMI. All Proposals shall become the exclusive property of the CNMI government.

/s/ Benigno R. Fitial
Governor, CNMI

/s/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, Procurement & Supply

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP10-GOV-039

A&E of Well Fields Isolation and Water System Improvements

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, through the CNMI Water Task Force, are soliciting sealed Proposals from licensed architectural and engineering (A&E) firms for the Design of Well Fields Isolation and Water System Improvements, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project Scope of Work will be available at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, on or after **January 11, 2010**.

All questions concerning this proposal shall be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 pm, **January 25, 2010**, to Pedro Sasamoto, WTF Program Manager (facsimile) number (670) 664-2279.

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Proposals must be sealed and marked **"A&E of Well Fields Isolation and Water System Improvements, RFP10-GOV-039"**. One (I) original and four (4) copies of sealed proposals must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 2:00 p.m. (CNMI local time), on February 10, 2010. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

The CNMI reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any imperfections in any proposal if to do so shall be in the best interests of the CNMI. All Proposals shall become the exclusive property of the CNMI government.

/s/ Benigno R. Fitial
Governor, CNMI

/s/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, Procurement & Supply

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
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Together with our Students, the State Board of Education,
Commissioner of Education, and the entire Public School System family,
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School Counselors Week
February 1-5

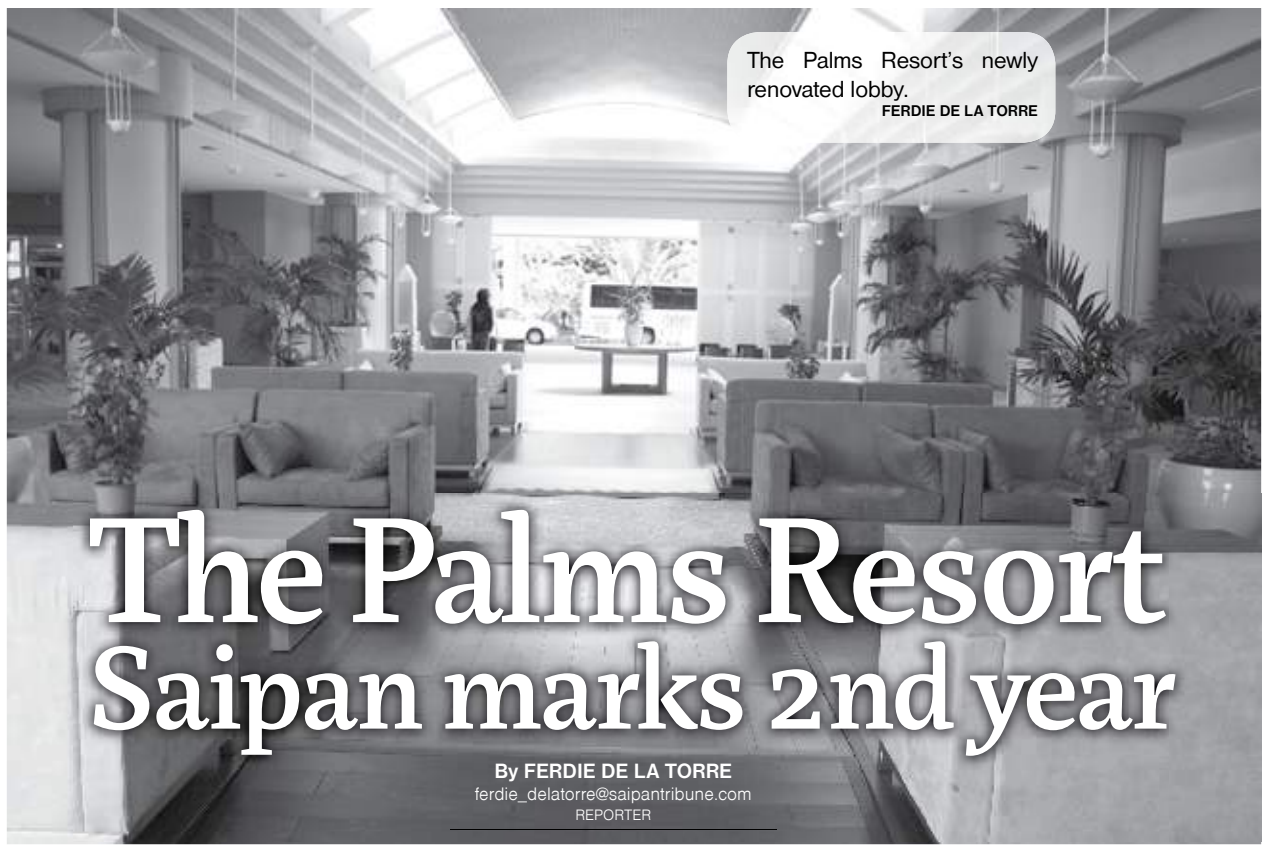
Career & Technical Education Month
February 1-28

Career & Technical Education provides the CNMI Public School System students with a school-to-careers connection and is the backbone of a strong, well-educated workforce, which fosters productivity in business and industry and contributes to America's leadership in the international marketplace.

Both the House and Senate passed resolutions declaring **Feb. 1-5**, as **National School Counseling Week** to honor the important role school counselors play in students' lives.

Students First

Advertising Feature



The Palms Resort's newly renovated lobby.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

The Palms Resort Saipan marks 2nd year

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Today marks the second year of The Palms Resort Saipan and the former Hotel Nikko Saipan is stronger than ever and continues to be a preferred landmark for tourists and locals alike.

In just a short period of time, the dedicated and hardworking hotel staff—with the support and guidance from the executive team—has successfully transitioned the San Roque hotel to its new identity as The Palms Resort Saipan.

"We have a master plan for five years to make The Palms Resort the best hotel on Saipan," The Palms Resort general manager Mustafa S. Issa said in an interview.

Issa said with a "super team" and a "fantastic group" of staff there is no reason why they could not make The Palms Resort No. 1.

Locally staffed

Issa said save for himself, all the executives at the hotel— financial comptroller, managers, and executive chef—are locals.

"This is our aim and our objective—to become a 100-percent local hotel not only with our clientele but also within our team," he said.

Owned by the United Micronesia Development Association, The Palms Resort is located on PauPau Beach. It has 313 oceanfront rooms and offers two world class restaurants—Minami Japanese Restaurant and the Kaenju Teppanyaki Restaurant.

The PauPau Bar and Terrace offers fusion Mexican buffet on Wednesday and Indian dinner buffet on Thursdays. Customers can enjoy the live island music and dance show nightly at the Sunset BBQ.

Guests can also relax by the pool with a tropical cocktail and enjoy a variety of freshly cooked burgers with fries and fruits at Isa Bar.

Activities galore

Guests and restaurant customers can attend nightly stargazing at The Palms Observatory, which boasts of powerful telescopes for viewing the heavens at no charge.

For sports enthusiasts, the hotel has a large swimming and diving pools, five tennis courts, three racquetball courts, and state-of-the-art fitness center—The Palms Cardio & Pilates Center (PC2).

Other facilities include Jiyu at The Palms Massage Center, Business Center, Function Rooms, Yoga Room, Coral Reef Lounge, and Saipan Sunset Cruise, among others.

The Palms Resort executive chef David Jones and food and beverage manager Cristina Lustre pose with Cecil Lifoifoi at the Minami Restaurant.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

The Palms Resort Saipan general manager Mustafa Issa.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Issa said in converting Hotel Nikko to a brand new The Palms Resort they have to set ground rules in laying the foundation in marketing.

"We have to gain the trust of the market locally and internationally," Issa said.

The general manager recalled that they took over Hotel Nikko during the worse economic disaster that they have ever seen in the region.

He said tourism was down, there were flights cancellations, and airlines were suffering.

Issa said that maybe was the reason Japan Airlines, Hotel Nikko's owner, pulled out of Saipan because they could not handle the problems in the destination anymore.

Start from scratch

Having the experience to operate a hotel, Issa said his management team started from scratch, beginning with the logo design and positioning the hotel by gaining the trust of the local clientele.

"I am very proud to say that right now, the local market looks at The Palms Resort as the place to go—for special events and for food and beverage," he said.

The general manager, however, admitted that there is still a lot of work to be done as room occupancy continues to suffer because the tourism market has yet to recover and the number of airlines is still way down with the cancellation and reduction of plane seats.

Issa said they have to continue to be aggressive in their uphill battle with the decline tourism in order to increase their share of the market.

The Palms Resort has been trying to get as much as they can from the Japanese, Korean, and Chinese markets.

"The most important things that we did as a team is trying to position this hotel as the place for food and beverage in our restaurants for local market," Issa said.

The hotel introduced different themes in their food and beverage every day.

"We have different things for example on Monday if you come in, we have a Japanese buffet. Tuesday we have Mediterranean buffet. On Wednesday we have Mexican. Thursday Indian, Friday the seafood and Saturday is the Chinese," Issa said.

At Kaenju Restaurant, guests and customers can enjoy "all-you-can-eat steak and seafood," which according to Issa has turned out to be very attractive to the local market.

Hotel makeover

Issa said The Palms Resort also completely renovated its lobby.

"We came up with a new design of the lobby to give the right impression to both the tourists and the local guests," Issa said, adding that for 2010 they will renovate the rooms to show different designs.

He said they are also going to introduce the executive floor concept.

"Up in the 14th and 15th floors it's executive accommodations for executives or for high government officials or for the clientele looking for exclusive accommodations. There will be special lounge for them up there where they can have breakfast, or they have coffee, tea and softdrinks and in the evening they have drinks and cocktails," he said.

Issa said the renovation of rooms is high up in their list this year.

"We would like to start renovating our rooms starting from the two top floors and coming down," he said.

The Palms Resort executive chef David Jones, food and beverage manager Cristina Lustre, and marketing communications executive Valerie B. Camacho with the staff of Minami Restaurant.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Issa said the Coral Reef Lounge will be moved to a different bigger and better location in the lobby for the local market too.

He said the customers can order and take home cakes, bread, delicacies that are made in the hotel.

Issa vowed to introduce new concepts as the hotel grows.

"We're taking our time and we're doing it slowly," he said.

The general manager is also optimistic for 2010, particularly its first four months.

"Talking to the tour operators in Japan and Korea they are very comfortable with the first four months," he said.

However, Issa said, their concern is from May up to October because the booking in this period doesn't show a strong indication of tourist arrivals.

"But I really believe that the end of the year will end on a high note and 2011 will start with economic prosperity," he said.

Locally owned

With respect to Palms Resort's ownership, Issa said this is the only hotel that is owned by the local people.

"So this is truly a pride of the local community to make them understand that they own one of the best hotels on the island," he said.

"UMDA is a local company having been operating here for many, many years. It is the company of the people of Saipan. Our chairman is Joe Lifoifoi, a very respectable local personality and an important man on the island," Issa said.

He said The Palms Resort is not only locally owned but locally operated.

"I really believe that local market plays an important part of the success of a hotel," he said.

Issa said a hotel that fails to get 60 percent of the business in the local market will never succeed.

"Right now we are getting almost 80 percent of our business from the local market," he said.

Remembering the first year they took over Hotel Nikko, Issa said it was a very tough year.

"We have to develop our personality. Like a baby, an infant we had to develop our personality, our character. We have to earn the trust from within the local community and from the tourist community," he said.

Different strokes for different folks

Marketing communications executive Valerie B. Camacho said it's wonderful to have The Palms Resort reach its second year.

"We have lots to offer to everyone—tourists and local guests alike. So its pretty much coming all the way here is worth the trip. We have great food and beverage, great rooms, great facilities. We have yogas, we have Pilates, and the gym overall. So please come over," Camacho said.

On top of the local market, she said, they are of course still working on attracting more tourists to the island and the hotel.

"The local market actually is very supportive to The Palms Resort and we are very thankful for that," Camacho said.

Donning new uniforms, The Palms Resort staff greet guests with smiles.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Business

Obama: Cutting deficit as important as job growth

WASHINGTON (AP)—Trimming budget deficits is as important as creating jobs to sustain the economic recovery, President Barack Obama said Saturday.

Obama

The government reported Friday the economy grew at an annual rate of 5.7 percent in the final three months of 2009. It was the second consecutive quarter of growth and the fastest rate in more than six years.

"A sign of progress," Obama said in his weekly radio and Internet address. "But as we work to create jobs, it is critical that we rein in the budget deficits we've been accumulating for far too long."

Hammered by Republicans for billions of dollars in spending that added to the deficit, Obama outlined steps he said would rein in spending. They include rules requiring that spending or tax cuts be offset by cuts to other programs or tax increases, a freeze on most discretionary spending and a presidentially appointed commission to recommend ways to reduce the deficit.

Obama said "pay-as-you-go" rules that were in place in the 1990s led to surpluses at the end of the decade. But after Congress eliminated the rules, Obama said the result was the $1.3 trillion deficit he faced upon taking office in January 2009.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

AP Sources: Govt blesses Toyota gas pedal fix

DETROIT (AP)—Toyota Motor Corp. plans to start sending parts to dealers in the coming days to fix a sticky gas pedal problem that has tarnished its image and led to the recall of 4.2 million cars and trucks on three continents, according to people briefed on the matter. Toyota plans to reveal details of the fix on Monday morning, according to two dealers who asked not to be identified because the plan had not been announced. One dealer was told by a Toyota executive that the parts could arrive Thursday or Friday. The automaker told the dealers about the plan Saturday after hearing from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that it did not object to the fix, the dealers said. A Department of Transportation official, who also requested anonymity because the announcement had not been made, confirmed that the government had no objections.

Books pulled from Amazon.com in pricing dispute

NEW YORK (AP)—New copies of Hilary Mantel's "Wolf Hall," Andrew Young's "The Politician" and other books published by Macmillan were unavailable Saturday on Amazon.com, a drastic step in the ongoing dispute over e-book prices. Macmillan CEO John Sargent said he was told Friday that its books would be removed from Amazon.com, as would e-books for Amazon's Kindle e-reader. Books will be available on Amazon.com through private sellers and other third parties, Sargent said. Sargent met with Amazon officials Thursday to discuss the publisher's new pricing model for e-books. He wrote in a letter to Macmillan authors and literary agents Saturday that the plan would allow Amazon to make more money selling Macmillan books and that Macmillan would make less. He characterized the dispute as a disagreement over "the long-term viability and stability of the digital book market."

Nation

US halts airlifts of Haiti patients, citing space

MIAMI (AP)—The U.S. military has halted flights carrying Haitian earthquake victims to the United States because of an apparent dispute over where seriously injured patients should be taken for treatment.

An American doctor treating victims in Port-au-Prince warned that at least 100 patients needed to get to better hospitals or they could die, while the U.S. government said it was working to expand hospital capacity in both Haiti and in the U.S.

It was unclear exactly what prompted the Wednesday decision by the U.S. military to suspend the flights, or when it would end. Military officials said some states were refusing to take patients, though they wouldn't say which states.

"There has been no policy decision by anyone to suspend evacuee flights," White House spokesman Tommy Vietor said. "This situation arose as we started to run out of room."

The halt came one day after Florida Gov. Charlie Crist wrote a letter to U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, warning that "Florida's health care system is quickly reaching saturation, especially in the area of high level trauma care."

But officials in Crist's office said they didn't know of any Florida hospitals were turning away patients. He asked Sebelius to activate the National Disaster Medical System, which is typically used in domestic disasters and pays for victims' care.

ACROSS THE NATION

South blanketed with ice, snow; mid-Atlantic next

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—A storm that blanketed the South with snow Saturday had children eager to sled down hills, while grown-ups were warned to stay off slippery roads as officials worked to clear a mess of wrecks and downed power lines. Nearly a foot of snow had fallen in parts of western North Carolina, and nearly 10 inches had fallen in some areas north of Memphis, Tenn. In Nashville, about a half-foot of snow was on the ground, the National Weather Service said. A central Tennessee woman was killed when a tree weighed down with ice crashed into her mobile home early Saturday, Maury County Fire Department Assistant Chief Roy Brooks told The Tennessean of Nashville. The woman, whose name was not immediately released, was pronounced dead at the scene.

3 Americans now held in Iran for half of a year

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—It's been six months since three young Americans were taken into custody in Iran, and the mother of one said even hiring an attorney in Iran has brought no new information on how they are doing. "It's like there's this brick wall in front of us, and we can't get through," Cindy Hickey, the mother of Shane Bauer, told The Associated Press in a telephone interview. "The concern for me as a mother is how this has to be taking a toll on them psychologically, and I would like someone to see them physically to tell me that they're in OK health." Bauer, Sarah Shourd and Josh Fattal were hiking in Iraq's northern Kurdistan region in July when they accidentally crossed the border, their families have said. All three are graduates of the University of California at Berkeley.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Department of Public Health
Division of Public Health

WIC
WOMEN • INFANTS • CHILDREN

ANNOUNCEMENT

WIC IS CHANGING TO BETTER SERVE YOU!

Effective February 6, 2010, the CNMI WIC Clinic will be open four (4) Saturdays per month. We will no longer have our 4:30p.m. - 6:00p.m. hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays to accommodate our new Saturday hours. If you need to schedule a Saturday appointment call the WIC Front Desk at 664-4084.

WIC serves income qualified pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and children under the age of 5. Call us to see if you qualify.

WIC QUICK TIP: *String beans and wing beans are a good source of iron, which prevents anemia. So check out your local farmers market today and pick up some anemia fighting beans.*

WIC = "Healthy Families for a Lifetime"

USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-10-013

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, is soliciting proposals from qualified engineering firms for the provision of an AutoCad Operator in the office of Water-Wastewater Division, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands.

The proposal shall address the AutoCad Operator's ability to perform the following essential elements.

1. The operator must provide and use his own AutoCad software of the latest version, and install at CUC provided computer. He must also be knowledgeable and efficient of program extension like adobeacrobat, etc.
2. The operator must be versatile from the lowest release software version to the latest version of AutoCad.
3. Prepare construction plan, drawings, shop drawings from rough schematic sketches with minimum supervision.
4. Perform as-built drawings. Create a computerized file of the existing as-built drawings.
5. Perform site inspections and investigations for development of a concise plan and drawings.
6. Read and interpret plans.
7. Perform associated works as necessary.

Proposals shall be evaluated and ranked based on technical criteria listed below and selection made in accordance with CUC Procurement Regulations.

1. Proficiency of the AutoCad Operator (30%)
2. Experience and familiarity in water-wastewater utilities (45%)
3. Availability (25%)

The Scope-of-Work may be pick-ed up at CUC, Procurement & Supply Office at the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, 3rd Floor, Room No.4, between 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except on Government observed holidays.

One (1) original and five (5) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RFP-10-013, AutoCad Operator for Water-Wastewater Division, Saipan"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No.4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **Tuesday, February 09, 2010 at 10 AM** local time (CST). Late submissionsand conditional bids will not be considered.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the interest of the government.

All inquiries should be directed to Robert Lorenz, Water-Wastewater Deputy Director at (670) 235-7025 Ext. 147 and Manny B. Sablan. Purchasing Officer at (670) 235-7025 Ext. 134.

/s/ TIMOTHY CONNOR	/s/ ABE UTU MALAE	/s/ ANTONIO S. MUNA
Legal Counsel	Assistant Executive Director for Operation	Executive Director

World

Latrines join food, water on Haiti's crisis list

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Relief officials are scrambling to confront a sanitation crisis that could spread malaria, cholera and other deadly diseases throughout the chaotic camps packed with hundreds of thousands of Haitian earthquake survivors.

Shortages of food, clean water, adequate shelter and latrines are creating a potential spawning ground for epidemics in a country with an estimated 1 million people made homeless by the Jan. 12 quake.

On Saturday, a single portable toilet served about 2,000 people in a sprawling camp across a street from the collapsed National Palace, forcing most to use a gutter that runs next to an area where vendors cook food and mothers struggle to bathe their children.

"We wash the vegetables first from water brought in by trucks, but a lot of times the water isn't clean," said Marie Marthe, 45, cooking a large pot of collard greens, carrots and goat as flies gathered on her daughter's diaper. "We don't have any choice."

Survivors have erected flimsy shelters of cloth, cardboard or plastic in nearly every open space left in the capital.

Women wait until night to bathe out of buckets, shielding their bodies behind damaged cars and trucks. Water is recycled—used first for brushing teeth, then for washing food, then for bathing.

"My 1-year-old has had diarrhea for a week now, probably because of the water," said Bernadel Perkington, 40. "When the earthquake happened I had 500 gourdes (about 15 U.S. dollars), which I was using for clean water for her. The money for that ran out yesterday."

Haiti detains Americans taking kids across border

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Ten Americans were detained by Haitian police on Saturday as they tried to bus 33 children across the border into the Dominican Republic, allegedly without proper documents.

The Baptist church members from Idaho called it a "Haitian Orphan Rescue Mission," meant to save abandoned children from the chaos following Haiti's earthquake. Their plan was to scoop up 100 kids and take them by bus to a rented hotel at a beach resort in the Dominican Republic, where they planned to establish an orphanage.

Whether they realized it or not, these Americans—the first known to be taken into custody since the Jan. 12 earthquake—put themselves in the middle of a firestorm in Haiti, where government leaders have suspended adoptions amid fears that parentless or lost children are more vulnerable than ever to child trafficking.

"In this chaos the government is in right now we were just trying to do the right thing," the group's leader, Laura Silsby, told reporters at the judicial police headquarters in the capital, where the Americans were being held pending a Monday hearing before a judge.

Silsby said they only had the best of intentions and paid no money for the children, whom she said they obtained from well-known Haitian pastor named Jean Sanbil of the Sharing Jesus Ministries.

US beefing up missile defenses in Persian Gulf

WASHINGTON (AP)—As the Obama administration edges toward imposing tougher sanctions on Iran, it has begun upgrading its approach to defending its Persian Gulf allies against potential Iranian missile strikes, officials said Saturday.

The United States has quietly increased the capability of land-based Patriot defensive missiles in several Gulf Arab nations, and one military official said the Navy is beefing up the presence of ships capable of knocking down hostile missiles in flight.

The officials discussed aspects of the defensive strategy on condition of anonymity because some elements are classified.

The moves have been in the works for months and are part of a broader adjustment in the U.S. approach to missile defense, including in Europe and Asia. Details have not been publicly announced, in part because of diplomatic sensitivities in Gulf countries which worry about Iranian military capabilities but are cautious about acknowledging U.S. protection.

The administration will send a review of ballistic missile strategy to Congress on Monday that frames the larger shifts. Attention to defense of the Persian Gulf region, a focus on diffuse networks of sensors and weapons and cooperation with Russia are major elements of the study, according to documents obtained by The Associated Press.

WORLD BRIEFS

Anger as NATO airstrike kills 4 Afghan soldiers

KABUL (AP)—A joint U.S.-Afghan force called in an airstrike on what turned out to be an Afghan army post after taking fire from there before dawn Saturday, killing four Afghan soldiers and prompting an angry demand for punishment from the country's defense ministry. Both NATO and Afghan authorities described the clash around a snow-covered outpost in Wardak province southwest of Kabul as a case of mistaken identity. NATO called the attack "unfortunate" and promised a full investigation. Nevertheless, the deadly strike threatens to strain relations between NATO and the Afghan government at a time when both sides are calling for closer partnership in the fight against the Taliban. The fighting came on the heels of several cases of bloodshed between Afghans and Americans in recent weeks.

China suspends military exchanges with US

BEIJING (AP)—China suspended military exchanges with the United States, threatened unprecedented sanctions against American defense companies and warned Saturday that cooperation would suffer after Washington announced $6.4 billion in planned arms sales to Taiwan. The response to Friday's U.S. announcement, while not entirely unexpected, was swift and indicated that China plans to put up a greater challenge than usual as it deals with the most sensitive topic in U.S.-China relations. "This is the strongest reaction we've seen so far in recent years," said Stephanie T. Kleine-Ahlbrandt, northeast Asia project director for the International Crisis Group. "China is really looking to see what kind of reaction it's going to receive from Obama on this."

Malaysia's Anwar doesn't expect sodomy conviction

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim said Saturday he does not expect to be convicted on charges he sodomized a male former aide. "The medical records are in our favor," he told reporters in Manila after meeting with former Philippine President Joseph Estrada. "If they (prosecutors) go by the law, there would be no conviction." Malaysia's Federal Court on Friday upheld a lower court's ruling that the prosecution does not need to provide Anwar with medical reports, camera recordings and other evidence ahead of his trial for alleged sodomy—a crime in the Muslim-majority country that carries a jail sentence of up to 20 years.

Health & Fitness

The 'Eat This' duo tackles the kitchen

THE WASHINGTON POST
Top, the Coles family—from left, Amber, Shayne, Norris and Tameka—are moving more, in TLC's "One Big Happy Family."

THE WASHINGTON POST
Right, the "Eat This" duo tackles the kitchen, in a new book. Here, Mushroom Melts.

By JENNIFER LARUE HUGET
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

Every time I hear that David Zinczenko and Matt Goulding are publishing another book in their "Eat This, Not That!" series, I steel myself: Having written about several already, I'm resolved not to fall prey to their charms again.

And yet here I sit.

The fellows, editor in chief and food and nutrition editor, respectively, of Men's Health magazine, have put together another compelling volume that shows how we can all bypass the hyper-caloric, fat- , sugar- and salt-laden offerings from fast-food joints and quick-serve restaurants to make our diets more healthful and nutritious.

In past iterations, they've followed a formula, comparing a better-for-you offering (eat this) with something quite horrible (not that). In their new book, "Cook This, Not That!" (Rodale, 2009), they advise taking what for some is a drastic measure: learning to cook.

The premise is that by simply mastering a few basic but tasty recipes and substituting them for takeout or other meals prepared by others, we can seize control of what we eat, how many calories we consume and how much we spend. The authors make an excellent case for eating in: In the time it takes for a pizza or some Chinese food to be delivered or for the family to pile into the car and drive to a restaurant, any of us can cook a delicious, satisfying and nutritious meal in our kitchen.

The book features more than 200 recipes, each illustrated with a full-page color photo and contrasted with a restaurant favorite. None takes more than 20 or 30 minutes to cook. The Spinach Salad With Warm Bacon Dressing, at 220 calories, 11 grams of fat (three of them saturated) and 560 milligrams of sodium per serving, is offered as a substitute for the Grilled Shrimp 'N Spinach Salad from Applebee's, which delivers 1,040 calories, 11 grams of saturated fat and 2,380 milligrams of sodium (more than the government's dietary guidelines budgets for a full day).

Some features of "Cook This, Not That!" are aimed at the reluctant or novice cook: There's a chapter with a guide to outfitting a kitchen for just $331, for instance. But because Goulding was a professional chef before he joined Men's Health, he's made these recipes worthwhile for more-seasoned cooks, too. One example: a more healthful version of chicken fried rice than the kind you'd get at P.F. Chang's, which at the time the book was written contained an ungodly 4,548 milligrams of sodium. (The restaurant chain apparently has since reduced the dish's sodium content.) The homemade version has 720 milligrams.

One thing I love about the "Cook This" approach is its emphasis on fresh, whole ingredients and its embrace of delicious items (such as the bacon in that spinach salad) that many diet and nutrition guides would consider off-limits.

"We're all about honest, simple food," the authors write. "And we're not afraid to use the real ingredients delicious food demands." They eschew light mayonnaise, Splenda, fat-free half-and-half and "sneaky tricks like folding pureed broccoli into your brownies, using Fiber One cereal as breading, or replacing butter with applesauce in the chocolate cookies."

See why I like these books so much?

Like the others in the series, this book is packed with handy tips (top your pancakes with easy-to-make fruit compote instead of maple syrup) and graphic guides to selecting the best foods, from meats and dairy products to pantry staples. And it isn't afraid to play favorites: Breyers All Natural ice cream is singled out as the "go-to brand for all your ice cream needs" because milk, rather than cream, is the first ingredient; it thus has fewer calories and fat than other brands.

"The first six books were telling people how to make smart choices when in a compromising position," Goulding told me over the phone. "They were about mitigating damage" when your only dining option is the food court.

The new book, he said, is "not about cutting out foods you really love, but about learning to produce them in an environment in which you're in control." That control lets you take charge of how much butter, salt and sugar you consume, said Goulding.

So, do the authors practice what they preach? Zinczenko said via e-mail, "I cook occasionally, but not as much as Matt." Goulding said that, even with his busy schedule, he tries to cook dinner five nights a week.

But even those who feel they can't manage that frequency can improve their diets by just cooking more often.

Life & Style

Miss Virginia wins 2010 Miss America crown

Host Mario Lopez watches Miss Virginia Caressa Cameron react after being crowned Miss America by Miss America 2009 Katie Stam, Saturday Jan. 30, 2010 in Las Vegas.

AP

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Miss Virginia Caressa Cameron won the 2010 Miss America title Saturday night after strutting in a skintight yellow dress, belting Beyonce's "Listen" from "Dreamgirls" and telling kids they should get outside more often.

Cameron, a 22-year-old from Fredericksburg, Va., won a $50,000 scholarship and the crown in Las Vegas after a pageant that started with 53 contestants. She outlasted her opponents in swimsuit, evening gown, talent and interview competitions.

Cameron is broadcast journalism student at Virginia Commonwealth University, and wants to become an anchor.

When asked during the interview portion of the competition her thoughts on fighting childhood obesity, Cameron said parents should curb television and video games.

"We need to get our kids back outside, playing with sticks in the street like I did when I was little," she said. "Expand your mind, go outside and get to see what this world is like."

Cameron said her win was a testament to her family's strength.

"You can be and become anything that you want to be, even Miss America," she said.

Miss California Kristy Cavinder was the first runner-up, winning $25,000.

The young women who came out on stage at the beginning of the pageant and danced to "I Gotta Feeling" by the Black Eyed Peas are from all 50 states plus the District of Columbia, Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

After a week of preliminary competition, they each introduced themselves to the crowd Saturday at the Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino.

"From the home of the Governator, I am here to pump you up," Cavinder said as she was introduced.

The judges, the public and contestants themselves then trimmed the field over the next two hours.

Actor and "Extra" host Mario Lopez hosted the 89-year-old pageant with help from Clinton Kelly of TLC's "What Not to Wear." The pageant was broadcast live on TLC.

The panel of judges included radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh, actress Vivica Fox, musician Dave Koz, Miss America 2002 Katie Harman, gymnast Shawn Johnson and former "American Idol" finalist Brooke White. Comedian Paul Rodriguez was set to be a judge, but organizers said he pulled out because of a family emergency.

'Winter's Bone,' 'Restrepo' earn Sundance honors

AP

Rodrigo Garcia, top center, writer/director of the film "Mother and Child," poses with cast members, from left, Samuel L. Jackson, Kerry Washington, Naomi Watts and Jimmy Smits at the premiere of the film at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, Monday, Jan. 25, 2010.

PARK CITY, Utah (AP)—The Ozark Mountains drama "Winter's Bone" and the war-on-terror documentary "Restrepo" won top honors Saturday among U.S. movies at the Sundance Film Festival.

Director Debra Granik's "Winter's Bone," the story of a 17-year-old trying to uncover the fate of her father among the criminal clans of the Ozarks, earned the grand jury prize for American dramas at Sundance, Robert Redford's showcase for independent cinema.

Granik and co-writer Anne Rosellini also won the festival's Waldo Salt screenwriting award for their script, based on the novel by Daniel Woodrell.

The awards came hours after Roadside Attractions bought North American theatrical rights for "Winter's Bone." Roadside plans to release the film this summer.

It was the second-straight Sundance drama winner featuring a breakout role for a young actress. Jennifer Lawrence, whose credits include Charlize Theron's "The Burning Plain," offers a fearless lead performance in "Winter's Bone," which follows Gabourey Sidibe's sizzling debut in the title role of "Precious: Based on the Novel `Push' By Sapphire," last year's Sundance dramatic winner.

While "Precious" offered a view of a tough urban scene in Harlem, "Winter's Bone" presents a glimpse of a harsh backwoods landscape in Missouri.

"Life is really diverse on this continent that we happen to inhabit," Granik said in an interview after the awards ceremony. "I think there's something to understand that in any county, there's a story that is somewhat universal, but that it's also worthy just to note the differences and appreciate the differences among the counties that make up the 50 states, that make up, then, the larger picture."

The U.S. documentary prize went to "Restrepo," which chronicles the lives of an American platoon fighting in Afghanistan, where the troops have erected an outpost to a fallen comrade, Pvt. Juan Restrepo. The film was directed by journalist Sebastian Junger, author of "The Perfect Storm," and photographer Tim Hetherington.

"We're in the middle of two wars," Junger said. "If our movie can help this country understand how to go forward, we would be incredibly honored by that."

The audience award for favorite U.S. drama chosen by Sundance fans was given to the romance "happythankyoumoreplease," written and directed by and starring Josh Radnor, the star of "How I Met Your Mother."

"Waiting for Superman"—a study of the problems at U.S. public schools that was directed by Davis Guggenheim, who made the Academy Award winner "An Inconvenient Truth"—earned the audience award for U.S. documentaries.

A special jury prize was given to "Sympathy for Delicious," Mark Ruffalo's directing debut, in which he co-stars with friend and screenwriter Christopher Thornton, who plays a paralyzed deejay with the power to heal others but not himself.

Director David Michod's Australian teen drama "Animal Kingdom" earned the dramatic jury prize for world cinema, while the world documentary award went to Danish filmmaker Mads Brugger's "The Red Chapel," chronicling a regime-challenging trip to North Korea.

Javier Fuentes-Leon's Peruvian ghost story "Undertow" won the world-cinema audience honor for dramas, and Lucy Walker's British-Brazilian production "Waste Land," about an art project at a massive landfill, received the documentary audience prize for world cinema.

Roy Orbison gets Hollywood Walk of Fame star

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Late rock 'n' roll pioneer Roy Orbison has been honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Orbison's widow Barbara accepted the star in front of the Capitol Records building on his behalf on Friday. Orbison died in 1988 at the age of 52, in the midst of a comeback with The Traveling Wilburys, a whimsical supergroup that included Bob Dylan, George Harrison, Tom Petty and Jeff Lynne.

Lynne attended the ceremony, as did Eric Idle, Chris Isaak, Joe Walsh and Dwight Yoakam.

Orbison was famous for the wide range of his distinctive and emotional voice, especially in his songs about unrequited love like "Only the Lonely," ''Crying," ''In Dreams" and "Oh, Pretty Woman."

Actor Dan Aykroyd says Orbison was a great balladeer and a great rock 'n' roller who could be both gentle and vicious.

AP

Roy Orbison family members, from left, Westly Orbison, Alex Orbison, Barbara Orbison and Roy Orbison gather as the late Roy Orbison is honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, Friday, Jan. 29, 2010, in the Hollywood Section of Los Angeles.

Grammy weekend begins with Neil Young tribute

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Neil Young sat in the audience as 20 of his best known songs were performed on stage.

Elton John, James Taylor, Dave Matthews and more than a dozen other artists launched Grammy weekend with performances honoring Young as the MusiCares Person of the Year. The annual event celebrates an artist's philanthropy each year as it raises funds for the music industry charity that provides financial, medical and personal assistance to artists in need.

Young was honored for his decades of philanthropic service, including work with Farm Aid and the Bridge School Concerts, which raise money to provide services for kids with severe speech and physical impairments. The singer-songwriter and more than 2,000 other guests at the Los Angeles Convention Center were treated to new interpretations of his timeless songs, including "Harvest Moon" and "Cinnamon Girl," during Friday's nearly four-hour program.

"I'd forgotten how many songs I'd written," the 64-year-old musician said.

Jack Black served as the evening's host. He said the night's performers had been "unforgettably, awesomely and life-changingly" influenced by Young's music.

AP

Neil Young accepts the MusiCares Person of the Year award during a tribute in his honor on Friday, Jan. 29, 2010, in Los Angeles.

They included John, who said Young was "my hero" as an artist, philanthropist and humanitarian. John played piano and sang "Helpless" backed by Sheryl Crow, Leon Russell and Neko Case.

Taylor performed "Heart of Gold." Matthews offered a heartfelt version of "The Needle and the Damage Done." John Fogerty and Keith Urban sang "Keep Rocking in the Free World."

Ben Harper, backed by three female singers, offered a stirring take on "Ohio." Jones duetted with another acoustic guitarist on "Tell Me Why," and Crow played the accordion as she sang with Stephen Stills on "Long May You Run."

"Neil, how are you enjoying your Bar Mitzvah so far?" Black cracked. Later in the evening, the actor-comedian auctioned off his tie and shoes to benefit MusiCares. (The shoes fetched $600. The tie, $100.) Then he inexplicably removed his pants, and for a brief moment stood on stage in his tuxedo jacket and red boxer shorts.

Young's one-time band mates—Stills, David Crosby and Graham Nash—were the last to perform for their friend. "We made some of the best music of our lives with you, man," said Crosby, a previous MusiCares honoree.

Young watched the show with his wife, Pegi, by his side. At the end of the night, a humble Young took the stage and said he hoped the songs he's writing today are as good as the ones performed Friday.

"It's been a great night. It wore me out," he said. "Now I've got to go back and try and write some songs."

He went on to say that he's inspired by fellow MusiCares honoree Tony Bennett and his longevity in the business.

"I look at him and say, 'All right, I can do this,'" Young said. "I'm going to keep on going, and I hope you do, too."

Taylor rehearses, Ke$ha shares Grammy dreams

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The music world is celebrating all over town this weekend with tributes, rehearsals, parties and, of course, a gift suite or two in anticipation of the 52nd Annual Grammy Awards on Sunday night at Staples Center. Here's a look:

DANCE COMMANDER: Ke$ha—who has the No. 1 song in the country with her dance groove "TiK ToK"—spent part of Saturday afternoon at the Grammys Styling Studio, picking out accessories and other fashions available for talent who are taking part of the show.

AP

In this Jan. 23, 2010 file photo, American singer Kesha arrives at the Cannes festival palace, to take part in the NRJ Music awards ceremony, in Cannes, southeastern France.

While she's not up for any awards, the singer is presenting the best new artist category. Ke$ha's debut album was released this month, and she hopes next year she'll be at the Grammys for a different reason.

"It's been a dream of mine to go to the Grammys. Now that I'm gonna be on the stage it's pretty surreal, so I can only dream that maybe next year I can find my name in one of the categories," she said.

And while she's dominated the airwaves with her party girl anthem, she took a bit of offense—playfully, of course—when she was described as such on Saturday.

"Define party girl, because yeah, I'm a walking good time, but I'm not like some starlet who goes out, doesn't wear underwear, gets a DUI," said Ke$ha.

"I'm so not that girl. But I am like a walking good time, but I'm having a good time just walking around here. I feel like a more proper title for myself would be a dance commander," she said.

A SWIFT REHEARSAL: Taylor Swift performed a rollicking version of her hit "You Belong With Me" as she rehearsed for her big Grammy moment, but she may have provided the most excitement when she came off the stage.

Several young fans were waiting anxiously as Swift gave a couple of quick television interviews. Afterward, she posed for pictures, and made one young man swoon when she shook his hand.

Swift was among a parade of A-list artists rehearsing at Staples Center on Friday, including Dave Matthews, Maxwell, Green Day, Black Eyed Peas, Sheryl Crow, Stevie Nicks, Mary J. Blige, Andrea Bocelli, Drake, Eminem and Lil Wayne.

As for Swift, she said she planned a low key night at her hotel after rehearsal, but with a treat—In-N-Out Burgers.

TIMELESS TRIBUTE: Elton John, James Taylor, Dave Matthews and more than a dozen other artists honored Neil Young as the MusiCares Person of the Year at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

The singer-songwriter and more than 2,000 other guests were treated to new interpretations of 20 of his timeless songs, including "Harvest Moon" and "Cinnamon Girl," during the nearly four-hour program.

Young was feted Friday night for his decades of philanthropic service, including work with Farm Aid and the Bridge School Concerts, which raise money to provide services for kids with severe speech and physical impairments.

"I'd forgotten how many songs I'd written," the 64-year-old musician said.

Young watched the show with his wife, Pegi, by his side. At the end of the night, a humble Young took the stage and said he hoped the songs he's writing today are as good as the ones performed Friday.

"It's been a great night. It wore me out," he said. "Now I've got to go back and try and write some songs."

'Jersey Shore' to return for 2nd season

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP)—MTV's "Jersey Shore" will be back for a second season.

The network's president of programming Tony DiSanto said Friday that 12 new episodes will air this summer.

According to the network, Pauly D, Mike, Snooki, Jenni, Sammi, Ronnie and Vinny escape the cold northeast and find themselves in a new destination.

The show about tanned twenty-somethings hasn't been without controversy.

In December, the New Jersey Italian American Legislative Caucus called for MTV to cancel the show, saying it promotes derogatory ethnic stereotypes and is "wildly offensive."

MTV isn't revealing how much the cast members are being paid to do the show.

Former deputy acquitted in 'Girls Gone Wild' case

RENO, Nevada (AP)—A jury acquitted a former Nevada sheriff's deputy of bribery charges Friday after she was accused of accepting nearly $10,000 in gifts in exchange for giving special treatment to the jailed founder of the "Girls Gone Wild" video empire.

Ex-Sheriff's Sgt. Michon Mills embraced her attorney and broke into tears as the foreman of the jury read the verdict in federal District Court on Friday evening.

The 39-year-old woman had been accused of accepting a $4,500 Cartier watch and a $5,000 Saks Fifth Avenue gift card from an associate of Joe Francis while he was jailed in Reno on tax charges in 2007 and 2008.

Mills, who said she returned the gifts and never considered them bribes, had no immediate comment. The jury, which deliberated for six hours, acquitted her on two counts of accepting a gratuity as a public official. Mills had faced up to two years in prison.

"I'm just thrilled for Michon that the jury saw things for what they really are," her lawyer, Leah Wigren, told The Associated Press.

Mills testified during the four-day trial that she didn't initially acknowledge accepting the gifts from Francis' Hollywood associate Aaron Weinstein because she didn't want to get lumped in with two other deputies at the jail who were under investigation for aiding Francis.

The two other former deputies have pleaded guilty to accepting a gratuity as a public official. One of them received $3,200 in cash and four Oakland Raiders tickets in exchange for smuggling sushi, barbecued chicken and other food to Francis.

Mills was assigned as the point of contact person for Francis after he was placed in the mental health housing unit of the jail. Prosecutors said he was allowed to run his multimillion dollar soft porn business while he was there.

"Numerous deputies testified they felt there was a 'hands-off policy' when it came to defendant Francis," Assistant U.S. Attorney Sue Fahami told the 10-woman, two-man jury earlier Friday. "He seemed to have the run of the house."

Wigren said in her closing arguments that the government failed to prove her client did anything to benefit Francis based on the gifts.

"There is no nexus between an official act and the gift," Wigren said.

Mills was given the "unprecedented" assignment to deal directly with Francis and his lawyers because he was internationally known — "a high profile inmate the likes of which they'd never seen before," Wigren said.

By all accounts, Francis was "very needy ... an obnoxious individual ... a 35-year-old multimillionaire with serious behavior problems," Wigren said.

"But it seems from this testimony she's to blame because inmate Francis was a vulgar person," she said.

Mills already has suffered enough by losing her job, the lawyer said.

"Her law enforcement career was destroyed," Wigren said. "She was at the height of her career when her life came crashing into Joe Francis. ... She was making about $100,000 a year and now she is a flagger for the highway."

Ex-deputy Ralph Hawkins was sentenced in December to three years probation and fined $4,000 for accepting the cash and tickets to Raiders games from Weinstein after U.S. prosecutors argued for leniency due to his cooperation in the case.

Weinstein is scheduled to be sentenced March 8 as part of a plea-bargain agreement with the U.S. Attorney's Office after he pleaded guilty to a charge of providing contraband in prison.

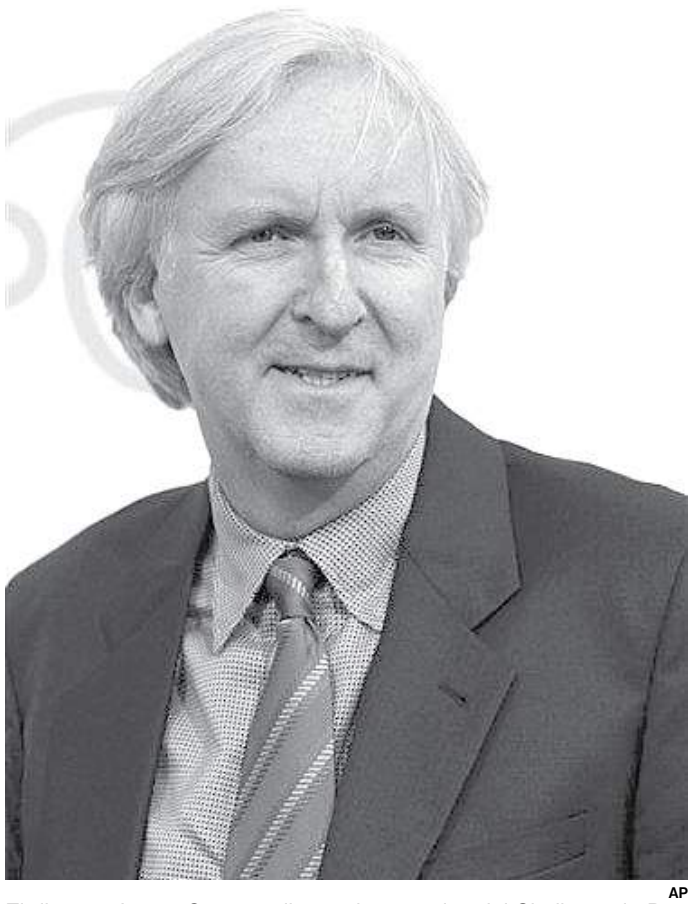
Mary Boxx, who was an inmate specialist, also pleaded guilty in December to one count of accepting gratuities by a public official. Her sentencing is set for March 14.

Bigelow, Cameron, Tarantino vie for director honor

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A month into Hollywood's awards season and the competition is still wide open. "The Hurt Locker" appears to be a front-runner, but "Avatar," "Precious," "Inglourious Basterds" and "Up in the Air" have won their share of awards, too.

The directors of these films—Kathryn Bigelow, James Cameron, Lee Daniels, Quentin Tarantino and Jason Reitman—compete Saturday for the top prize from the Directors Guild of America, an award that almost always predicts the Oscar winner for best director.

Bigelow's "The Hurt Locker" has already won directing and best-picture honors from the National Society of Film Critics, the New York Film Critics Circle, the Los Angeles Film Critics Association and at the Critics' Choice Awards, where both competed against the same four DGA nominees. "The Hurt Locker" was also the Producers Guild's best picture winner.



AP

El director James Cameron llega a los premios del Sindicato de Productores de Estados Unidos en Los Angeles el domingo 24 de enero de 2010.

Cameron, who is Bigelow's ex-husband, was best director and "Avatar" best picture at the Golden Globes. "Precious" has won half a dozen awards for supporting actress Mo'Nique. "Basterds" won acting ensemble honors from Critics' Choice and the Screen Actors Guild. "Up in the Air" was the National Board of Review's pick for best picture.

The DGA Web site boasts that its winner has gone on to win the Academy Award for directing all but six times since 1948, and typically, the film that wins the Oscar for best director goes on to win for best picture. The guild will also present awards in documentary, television and commercial categories. Norman Jewison will receive the guild's Lifetime Achievement Award for Distinguished Achievement in Motion Picture Direction at the ceremony at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza hotel.

Singer Etta James hospitalized with infection

RIVERSIDE, California (AP)—Etta James' son says the 72-year-old R&B singer is hospitalized in Southern California with a serious infection but he expects her to be released soon.

Donto James says his mother has been at Riverside Community Hospital for about a week and is recovering from sepsis caused by a urinary tract infection.

He says James, who lives in Woodcrest, entered a treatment program about a month ago to shake a dependency on painkillers and over-the-counter medicine. She was transferred to another facility and then the hospital when her physical condition worsened.

James, who sang everything from blues to jazz, is best known for the hit "At Last."

Beyonce portrayed James—and sang the 1941 song written by Mack Gordon and Harry Warren—in the film "Cadillac Records" and at an inaugural ball for President Barack Obama.

In this Nov. 24, 2008 file photo, Etta James arrives at the premiere of "Cadillac Records" in Los Angeles.

AP

Famed film editor struck, killed by car in NYC

NEW YORK (AP)—An award-winning film editor who worked on many of Errol Morris' documentaries, including "The Fog of War," was struck and killed by a getaway car speeding from a Manhattan drugstore robbery, police and her mother said on Saturday.

Karen Schmeer was crossing Broadway at West 90th Street on the Upper West Side on Friday when she was struck by a car driven by two suspects in the theft of over-the-counter medication from a CVS drugstore a few blocks away, police said.

Her mother, Eleanor DuBois Schmeer, confirmed the film editor's death. Schmeer was an editor for Morris' documentaries as well as other works, including "Sergio," which won a best-editing award last year at the Sundance Film Festival. The movie is about Sergio de Mello, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights killed in a 2003 explosion at U.N. headquarters in Iraq.

"She was just extremely loved by many, many friends," said Schmeer's mother, from her home in Portland, Ore., where her daughter was born.

Morris wrote on his Twitter feed that Schmeer's death was a "senseless tragedy."

Lt. John Grimpel said the driver of the car has been arrested on a murder charge shortly after Friday's crash. Schmeer was pronounced dead at St. Luke's Hospital.

On Saturday, police were still looking for a passenger who fled from the car as well as a third suspect.

Although Schmeer's last listed address was in Boston, her mother said she was living in an apartment on the Upper West Side when she was killed.

In addition to editing Morris' Academy Award-winning documentary film, "The Fog of War," which profiled former Secretary of Defense Robert MacNamara, Schmeer worked as editor on many of his other films. She also was an editor for "Sketches of Frank Gehry," directed by Sydney Pollack.

Ex-Nevada deputy relieved over bribery acquittal

RENO, Nev. (AP)—A former Nevada sheriff's deputy says she's relieved that a jury has acquitted her of bribery charges, but still hurt because of how her colleagues turned against her.

Washoe County sheriff's Sgt. Michon Mills was accused of accepting nearly $10,000 in gifts in exchange for giving special treatment to Joe Francis, the jailed founder of the "Girls Gone Wild" video empire.

In a statement issued Saturday, Mills praised her attorney Leah Wigren and her family and friends for their support since her arrest two years ago. The jury acquitted her Friday.

But Mills says she was saddened and hurt by the lack of support from her former colleagues.

She says she intends to contact Sheriff Mike Haley to secure what she called her well-deserved retirement badge and plaque.

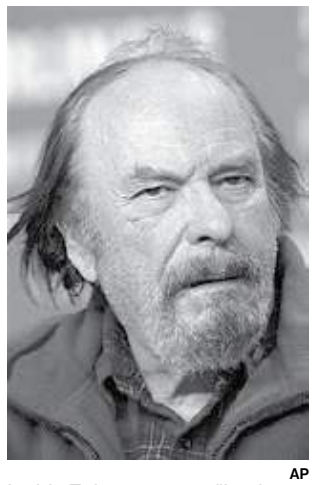
Rip Torn charged with breaking into Conn. bank

SALISBURY, Conn. (AP)—Actor Elmore "Rip" Torn has been charged with breaking into a Connecticut bank and carrying a loaded handgun while intoxicated.

State police say the 78-year-old Salisbury resident was arrested Friday night after police found him inside the Litchfield Bancorp with a loaded revolver.

The "Men in Black" actor has been taken into custody and booked on charges including burglary and possession of firearm without a permit. He is being held on $100,000 bond and is scheduled for a Monday appearance in Bantam Superior Court.

Last year, Torn was given probation in a Connecticut drunken driving case and granted permission to enter an alcohol education program. He also has two previous drunken driving arrests in New York. A spokesman for Torn did not immediately return phone calls Saturday.



AP

In this Feb. 11, 2009 file photo, actor Rip Torn speaks during a news conference for the movie "Happy Tears" at the Berlinale in Berlin, Germany.

Man fears workman with key may not be on the up-and-up

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: We had a repairman in our home yesterday who needed to leave to go to the hardware store for a part. My wife told him: "I have to go to pick up my son, so here's my spare key. Let yourself back in."

Abby, we do not know this man from Adam! He easily could have copied our key—he was going to the hardware store, after all—and returned to burglarize our home, or worse. We have three young children.

I realize my wife was in a tough spot. I know I should have more faith in the goodness of humanity, but I feel she put our family at risk. I'm considering having my locks changed. Your thoughts on the matter would be much appreciated.

PROTECTIVE IN LIVERMORE, CALIF.

DEAR PROTECTIVE: You should not have a repairman in your home at any time unless the person is licensed, bonded, and you have checked his references. If, heaven forbid, a home is burglarized, the owners should tell the police about any "stranger" who has been on the premises. And if you would sleep better at night knowing you had changed the locks as a precaution, then that's what you should do.

DEAR ABBY: I know thank-you notes are in order for wedding gifts, graduation presents and special anniversary gifts—but can the practice be overdone?

A woman in our group, "Bev," delights in sending thank-you notes for every little thing. She means well, but it makes the rest of us feel awkward.

Example: One day she dropped by as I was preparing a tuna sandwich for lunch, so I offered her one. We ate them on paper plates with a cup of tea. A few days later, a thank-you note arrived, which surprised me.

Abby, neither my mother nor I have ever sent or expected thank-you notes for casual visits. We're a group of older ladies who are just pleased to have friends who gather for lunch on birthdays or help each other out with small favors. We see and talk to each other often.

I don't want to offend Bev and will reply in kind to her, but have told others a simple thank you in person or a phone call will suffice for me. They agree. What do you think?

GOOD FRIENDS IN ARIZONA

DEAR GOOD FRIEND: Because Bev may not be aware of your feelings on the subject, I think you should also tell HER that in the future a simple thank you in person or a phone call will suffice.

DEAR ABBY: I have a question I can't ask of anyone but you. I am 84 years old, and I have been a widow for 10 years. I worked as a secretary all my life.

I am torn about accepting requests from a man I used to work for to "come and visit" him. This is not an invitation for a date—dinner, a movie, a drive. It's nothing but "a visit."

This happened before when I was divorced and living alone. The "visit" consisted of hugging, kissing and sex. That's all. It made me feel cheap.

Although I would love to be kissed and hugged by a man as handsome as George Clooney, I feel he is trying to use me. There is never any mention of a "date." Please hasten your reply and tell me how I should handle this.

FEELING USED IN BELLEVILLE, ILL.

DEAR FEELING USED: The next time "Prince Charming" calls and asks you to pay a house call, smile into the receiver (which will make your tone warmer and friendlier) and tell him you'd be "delighted" to see him—when he picks you up, takes you to dinner or a movie or even for a drive. And stick to your guns.

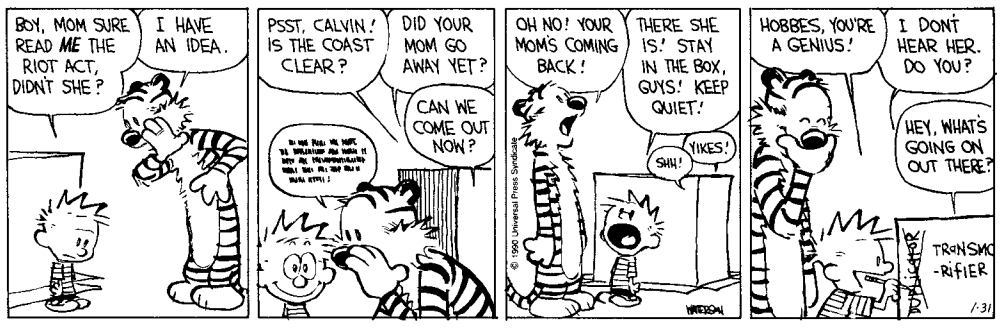
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

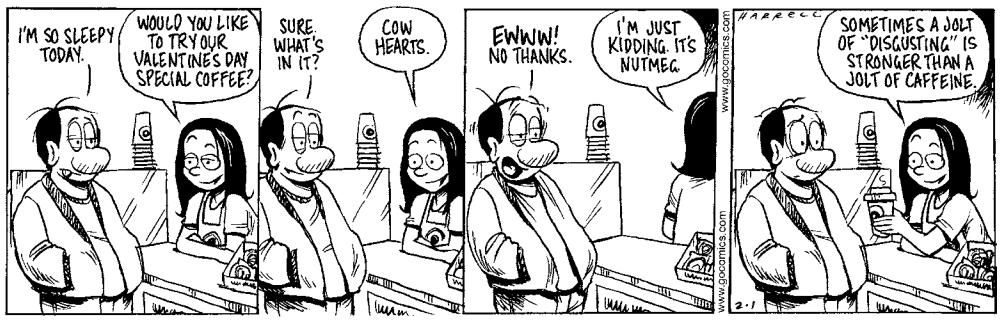

BOY, MOM SURE READ ME THE RIOT ACT, DIDN'T SHE?
I HAVE AN IDEA.
PSST, CALVIN! IS THE COAST CLEAR?
DID YOUR MOM GO AWAY YET?
CAN WE COME OUT NOW?
OH NO! YOUR MOM'S COMING BACK!
THERE SHE IS! STAY IN THE BOX, GUYS! KEEP QUIET!
YIKES!
SHH!
HOBBES, YOU'RE A GENIUS!
I DON'T HEAR HER. DO YOU?
HEY, WHAT'S GOING ON OUT THERE?
TRANSMOGRIFIER
1-31

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


I'M SO SLEEPY TODAY.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY OUR VALENTINE'S DAY SPECIAL COFFEE?
SURE. WHAT'S IN IT?
COW HEARTS.
EWWW! NO THANKS.
I'M JUST KIDDING. IT'S NUTMEG.
SOMETIMES A JOLT OF "DISGUSTING" IS STRONGER THAN A JOLT OF CAFFEINE.
2-1

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

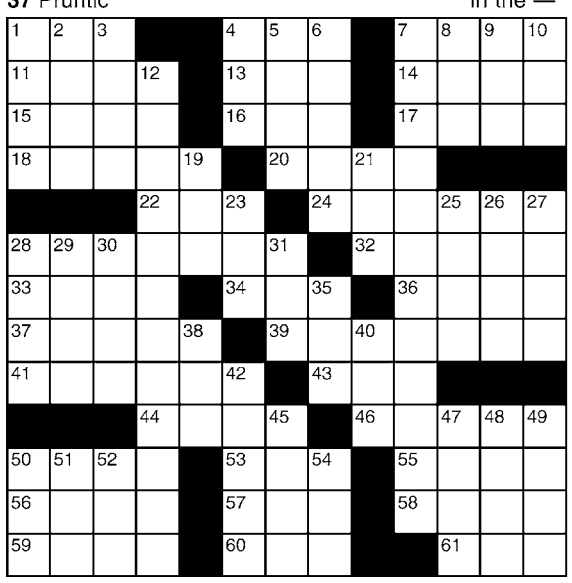
ACROSS
1 Sheepish remark
4 Springtime mo.
7 Reed instrument
11 Lisa, ex of "The View"
13 H1N1, for example
14 Tarzan's transport
15 Smell
16 Spinning toy
17 Paradise
18 Hiawatha's craft
20 Have on
22 Actress Merkel
24 Poor substitute
28 Baby sitter, often
32 Actress Sevigny
33 Fat
34 Sort
36 Competent
37 Pruritic
39 Summer footwear
41 Advantage
43 As well
44 Sea bird
46 Spin
50 Start a garden
53 Melody
55 Reverberate
56 Entreaty
57 Possibly will
58 Serves the purpose
59 Partner in crime
60 Before
61 Singer — "King" Cole

DOWN
1 United nations
2 Verdi opera
3 In due time
4 Sternward
5 Clear the streets of snow
6 Money of India
7 Was more important than
8 Auction action
9 Inseparable
10 Still, in verse
12 February 2nd
19 Conclusion
21 Joan of —
23 Parisian pal
25 Actress Jessica
26 Highway payment
27 Zorro's marks
28 Smooth-talking
29 Assess
30 — enemy
31 Capp and Capone
35 "Krazy —"
38 Thee
40 "... or — to be"
42 Lighter output
45 Storyteller
47 PC picture
48 Comedian Caroline
49 Missing
50 Hot tub
51 Right angle
52 Slithery fish
54 "Catcher in the —"

Solution time: 24 mins.

■	P	R	O	F	S	■	A	B	Y	S	S	■
O	R	A	C	L	E	■	P	R	E	A	C	H
P	A	S	T	E	L	■	P	A	S	T	R	Y
T	I	C	■	E	M	C	E	E	■	R	I	P
E	S	A	U	■	A	H	A	■	G	A	P	E
D	E	L	T	A	■	I	R	R	U	P	T	S
■	■	■	T	S	P	■	S	U	I	■	■	■
C	R	E	E	P	E	R	■	B	L	A	S	E
H	E	R	R	■	L	O	T	■	E	V	E	N
A	B	A	■	M	I	M	I	C	■	A	N	T
P	A	S	T	I	S	■	P	A	S	T	O	R
S	T	E	A	L	S	■	S	M	E	A	R	Y
■	E	R	O	D	E	■	Y	E	A	R	S	■

Saturday's answer 2-1



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Lee Thompson Young, 26; Big Boi, 35; Michael C. Hall, 39; Lisa Marie Presley, 42

Happy Birthday: Taking action by being responsible will be the key to moving in the right direction this year. Look at the past and present and do your best to make the future the place you want to be. It's up to you to make the personal decisions necessary to redefine your position and to place yourself where you know you will do much better. Your numbers are 4, 8, 14, 20, 22, 32, 39

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): A lot can be accomplished if you concentrate on what's been asked of you and combine it with what will make your efforts most effective. You have to maintain your principles if you want to move forward positively and graciously. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Get to know new people and network all you can. Offers that can bring you greater recognition, wealth and professional advancement will come to you unexpectedly. Don't let personal problems stand in your way. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You may have some interesting ideas but, for the time being, keep the peace and try doing things according to the rules and regulations you've been given. An interesting change at home will help you to stabilize your personal life and future. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Stop talking and start doing. You have to be willing to go the extra mile if you want to draw other people into your plans. Don't pass up an opportunity to travel or experience a different lifestyle. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Don't let impulsive behavior lead to personal problems. Patience will be necessary if you want to keep the peace. If you can incorporate what others want into your plans, it will make a huge difference to the outcome. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Be willing to accept change and make the alterations necessary to move forward financially, personally and in your relationships. If something or someone is holding you back, cut your losses and move on. Focus on business and learning. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Keep your thoughts and feelings to yourself until you know exactly how you are going to handle the situation you face. Changes at home will come about if you allow arguments to develop. Offer and ask for help and you will succeed. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): You may have to question what the people around you are doing. Don't give in to someone because you don't want confrontation. A change of plans will disrupt matters too much. Insist on everyone sticking to the agreed upon agenda. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Not everyone will be on your side. Before you enlist the help of others, find out where they stand. You don't need one of your insiders working against you. You may be tempted to travel but make sure it's cost efficient. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): You can make some extra cash or get involved in an investment that will bring you higher returns. A solid offer will bring about an opportunity you hadn't anticipated. Act quickly and you will enjoy plenty of benefits. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You will be back and forth regarding a personal relationship. Before you make a move, enlist the advice of someone you respect who has a lot more experience. Someone will want to invest in your future. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Don't partner with someone who wants to call the shots. A disagreement with someone you work with, for or are indebted to will leave you feeling empty. Listen but do not let matters evolve to a situation that is irreversible. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are intelligent, sensitive and passionate. You are creative and imaginative and have an abundance of energy.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

8					1			5
	9	2			6		3	
				7			2	
1	5		3	6	4			
		6				3		
			1	5	2		8	6
	3			9				
	1		5			6	9	
2			6					3

Difficulty Level ★ 2/01

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Saturday's SUDOKU Answer

6	8	2	9	7	4	3	5	1
5	3	4	1	6	8	9	7	2
7	1	9	2	5	3	8	6	4
9	2	8	4	3	7	5	1	6
3	4	5	6	2	1	7	9	8
1	7	6	5	8	9	4	2	3
8	6	3	7	9	2	1	4	5
2	9	1	8	4	5	6	3	7
4	5	7	3	1	6	2	8	9

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/30

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

PERSONAL VIDEO RECORDERS **Solution: 6 letters**

Y	S	S	E	I	P	S	M	A	R	G	O	R	P	W
L	L	A	T	S	N	I	N	I	T	L	I	U	B	A
D	A	S	N	O	U	T	K	O	C	S	T	A	E	T
R	I	R	U	A	R	A	E	S	I	E	E	N	S	C
A	C	G	E	O	L	A	P	R	S	T	C	X	H	H
W	R	S	I	W	E	O	G	I	A	O	P	O	O	R
R	E	T	A	T	I	N	G	E	D	C	I	O	W	B
O	M	U	T	C	A	N	A	E	S	C	T	I	S	S
F	M	P	A	U	A	L	D	T	E	E	R	I	O	T
T	O	N	D	L	T	B	E	E	L	E	I	F	V	R
S	C	I	S	A	V	V	L	R	S	U	T	V	V	E
A	O	T	M	I	I	O	P	E	A	W	M	I	O	A
F	O	R	E	L	L	V	E	V	A	S	D	I	M	M
P	O	W	E	R	A	I	Y	R	Ⓕ	Ⓔ	Ⓔ	Ⓢ	S	E
F	A	V	O	R	I	T	E	C	O	A	X	I	A	L

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Last Saturday's Answer: Bluetooth

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANKPACIFIC, LTD., Plaintiff, vs. STEVE K. MESNGON and JUDY ANN M. MESNGON, Defendants. — CIVIL ACTION NO. 09-0065 — NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on January 25, 2010, I will sell, at public auction to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property:

Lot No. 330 R 108, containing an area of 870 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 330 R 03, dated March 13, 1992, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 92-859, dated March 16, 1992, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on 1st, March, 2010, at the hour of 11:00 a.m., at Carlsmith Building, Isa Drive, Capitol Hill, P.O. Box 5241, Saipan, MP 96950-5241. The sale will be opened to general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED: Saipan, MP, January 26, 2010.

/s/ Vincent J. Seman
VINCENT J. SEMAN, F0361
Attorneys for Plaintiff

F. MATTHEW SMITH
LAW OFFICE OF F. MATTHEW SMITH, LLC
2nd Floor, MIC Building,
Chalan Monsignor Guerrero
San Jose Village
P.O. Box 501127
Saipan, MP 96950-1127
Telephone Nos.: (670) 234-7455 / 7427
Facsimile No.: (670) 234-7256

Attorney for Petitioner.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In re the Special Guardianship of TAO LIU, an incompetent person, By: LIQUAN LIU, Petitioner. — FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 10-0050 — NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR GUARDIANSHIP OF INCOMPETENT PERSON

Date: February 3, 2010
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Judge: Honorable Kenneth L. Govendo

Notice is hereby given that a verified petition was filed in the above-entitled court for the petition for guardianship of Tao Liu, an incompetent person, by the petitioner. The original petition is available for review at the Office of the Clerk of Court at Susupe, Saipan.

A hearing of the above-entitled matter will be held on February 3, 2010 at 9:00 a.m., at the Guma Hustisia, Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 28th day of January 2010.

/s/ F. MATTHEW SMITH (F0264)
Attorney for Petitioner

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
Announcement No. 10-001

POSITION TITLE:	Trades Helper (2) REVISED
PAY LEVEL:	11/03 – 11/12
	Salary will commensurate with qualifications
LOCATION:	Tinian, CNMI
OPENING DATE:	January 22, 2010
CLOSING DATE:	February 9, 2010

Minimum Qualifications Requirements: High School Graduate, GED, or its equivalent or one (1) year of experience in general grounds maintenance or other related positions. Applicants must have a valid CNMI Driver's license.

HOW TO APPLY
Interested persons may contact the Marianas Visitors Authority Tinian Office at (670) 433-9365 or the MVA Saipan Office at (670) 664-3200/01 for employment application forms. A completed application should be submitted together with the required documentation to complete the application process no later than the closing date of this announcement.

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Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 6-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $27 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$15	$27
• 5-Liner	$24	$39
• 3-Liner with picture	$24	$42
• 5-Liner with picture	$36	$57

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

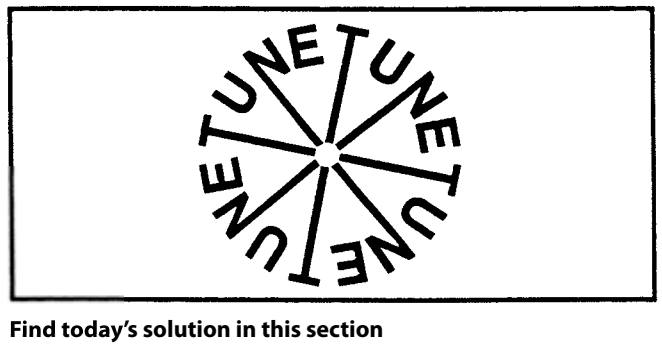
Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



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Find today's solution in this section

Warner brings end to stirring 12-year NFL career

TEMPE, Ariz. (AP)—Kurt Warner thanked God, hugged his children and wife and said goodbye to an NFL career that seems the stuff of sports fiction.

The 38-year-old quarterback announced his retirement Friday after a dozen years in a league that at first rejected him, then revered him as he came from nowhere to lead the lowly St. Louis Rams to two Super Bowls.

Then, as if going from stocking groceries to winning NFL MVP awards wasn't improbable enough, Warner was written off as a has-been and rose again to lead the long-suffering Arizona Cardinals to the Super Bowl.

A man of deep faith who carried a Bible to each post-game news conference, Warned walked away with a year left on a two-year, $23 million contract, knowing he still had the skills to play at the highest level.

"It's been an amazing ride," Warner said. "I don't think I could have dreamt it would have played out like it has, but I've been humbled every day that I woke up the last 12 years and amazed that God would choose to use me to do what he's given me the opportunity to do."

Warner had one of the greatest postseason performances ever in Arizona's 51-45 overtime wild card victory over Green Bay on Jan. 10, but sustained a brutal hit in the Cardinals' 45-14 divisional round loss at New Orleans six days later.

"He has had a dominant career," Cardinals defensive tackle Darnell Dockett said. "He's got to do what's best for his family. He played long enough. He took us to the Super Bowl last year.

"If you're going to go out, go out on top."

The Cardinals signed Warner to a one-year contract in 2005 largely because no other team would give him a chance to be a starter. His opportunities over the next two years were scattered and even when coach Ken Whisenhunt took over in 2007, Warner was the backup to Matt Leinart.

But when Leinart went down with an injury five games into the season, Warner got his chance. He started 48 of the remaining 49 games of his career.

"I've played 12 years, I'm a 38 years old and I believe I was playing at as high a level now and over the last two years as I was playing when I first got into the league," he said. "That's something I'm proud of."

Blessed with an uncanny throwing accuracy and a knack for reading defenses, Warner leaves the game with a legacy that could land him in the Hall of Fame even though he didn't get his first start until he was 28.

AP

Arizona Cardinals quarterback Kurt Warner holds his daughter Sierra Warner, 4, as he stands with his family from left, Kade Warner, 11, Jada Warner, 8, Elijah Warner, 6, Sienna Warner, 4, wife Brenda Warner, Zack Warner, 20, and Jesse Warner, 18. after he announced his retirement from football Friday, Jan. 29, 2010 at the Cardinals' training facility in Tempe, Ariz.

In a comparison with the 14 quarterbacks to make the Hall of Fame in the last 25 years, Warner has a better career completion percentage, yards per pass attempt and yards per game. Only Dan Marino, Brett Favre and Peyton Manning have more career 300-yard passing games.

In 124 regular-season games, Warner completed 65.5 percent of his passes for 32,344 yards and 208 touchdowns. He and Fran Tarkenton are the only NFL quarterbacks to throw for 100 touchdowns and 14,000 yards for two teams.

For more than 40 minutes, Warner thanked everyone who had helped him along the way, singling out Whisenhunt, for "his willingness to give me an opportunity that I don't know if anyone else would."

Cardinals general manager Rod Graves called it an emotional day "because I realize once again how extraordinary he was."

"I've only had the privilege of being around one other person that I can say was close to him and that was Walter Payton," Graves said. "I think when you have an extraordinary player and one who is just as extraordinary off the field, then you realize you were in the presence of someone special."

Whisenhunt said Warner ranked "at the top" of players he had coached.

"He's one of the best quarterbacks in this league," he said, "and I think it's well noted that he's one of the best people I've been around."

Warner brought his wife, Brenda, and their seven children to the podium, hugging each one of them. He choked up as he thanked them.

"Every day I come home and it doesn't matter if you won or lost or have thrown touchdowns or interceptions, the one thing that I always knew is that when I entered that door, when I stepped in our house, that none of that mattered to these guys," he said. "I can't tell you how much of a blessing that is."

Warner, who grew up in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and played at the University of Northern Iowa, ranks among the career leaders in a variety of passing statistics.

No player in NFL history reached 10,000 yards passing in less games and he tied Marino as fastest to reach 30,000.

He has the top three passing performances in Super Bowl history. His 1,156 yards passing in the 2008 playoffs broke the NFL record of 1,063 he set with St. Louis in 1999.

Cut by Green Bay in training camp, Warner played three seasons in the Arena Football League and one in NFL Europe, mixed in with a stint stocking grocery shelves back in Iowa.

Warner made the Rams as a backup in 1998, then was thrust into the starting role in 1999 when Trent Green was injured.

What followed was a masterful and wholly unexpected season, when he led the Rams to a 13-3 regular-season record, then a Super Bowl triumph over Tennessee. He was the league and Super Bowl MVP.

Warner had the Rams back in the big game in 2001, where "The Greatest Show on Turf" lost a squeaker to New England. That season he earned his second MVP.

But after an injury-plagued 2002 season, he was sacked six times and suffered a concussion in a 2003 season-opening loss to the New York Giants. He never started for St. Louis again.

He signed a free agent contract with the Giants for 2004, but was replaced by rookie Eli Manning after nine games. Warner came to the Cardinals in 2005 and was an off-and-on starter before replacing the injured Leinart part way through the 2007 season.

Warner had to beat out Leinart the following year, then led the Cardinals to the NFC West crown and three playoff victories before the narrow loss to Pittsburgh in last year's Super Bowl, where he threw for 377 yards.

He called that season the crowning achievement of his career.

Warner and his wife operate the First Things First Christian charitable foundation. Last year, he was named the NFL's Man of the Year for his off-field and on-field accomplishments.

"We all learned great lessons from Kurt's humility, dignity and grace. We will forever be thankful for the success he brought us and the unparalleled generosity he has shown the St. Louis community and beyond," Rams owner Chip Rosenbloom said in a statement.

Warner's departure leaves Leinart the presumed replacement. The former Heisman Trophy winner has started 17 games for Arizona but only one in the last two years.

Warner said he plans to spend time watching his children grow up, do some preaching and perhaps get into football broadcasting.

He knows what he wants his legacy to be.

"It's not the way I threw the football, it's not particular games that I won, but that they remember that here's a guy that believed, that worked hard," he said. "Although things didn't always go in his favor, he continued to press through, and with his faith in himself and his faith in God, he was able to accomplish great things."

Imada builds a 2-shot lead at Torrey Pines

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Phil Mickelson hit a drive into a eucalyptus tree that never came down. D.A. Point had a chip from 30 yards short of the flag that tumbled 20 yards over the green and into a hazard.

Ryuji Imada didn't feel as though he played that much better Saturday in the Farmers Insurance Open. The difference was he turned trouble into pars, then finished with a bonus birdie that put gave him a two-shot lead at Torrey Pines.

"The score looks pretty solid," Imada said after his 2-under 70. "But it was a struggle out there."

Imada avoided the problems that stalled so many other players on the South Course and wound up at 13-under 203. When his 35-foot birdie putt dropped on the 18th, he had a two-shot lead over Ben Crane and 25-year-old Michael Sim of Australia.

Imada will be going for his second PGA Tour victory, along with an invitation to the Masters.

And he surely likes his chances better than two years ago, when he finished runner-up at Torrey Pines. He started that final round 12 shots behind and finished eight shots behind Tiger Woods.

"It he was here, I'm sure he'd be 10 ahead of me," Imada said. "No, it would be a different feel. But it's still a good 18 holes of golf left, and hopefully, I can keep on playing the way I've been playing this week."

Even without Woods around, Imada had reason to realize what kind of work was ahead of him.

Crane, who had a 69, is as scrappy as they come. He has made only three bogeys over 54 holes, and moved into contention with four birdies on his final eight holes Saturday.

"You cannot predict what's going to happen in this game, especially on this course," Crane said.

Sim is a rising star whose career has been slowed by back injuries, yet he showed his potential last year by winning three times on the Nationwide Tour to earn an instant promotion to the big leagues. Trouble was, there was no room for him in many tournaments.

"I'm happy to be out here now," Sim said. "I've got an opportunity this week to win a golf tournament. I'd like to take full opportunity of that tomorrow."

U.S. Open champion Lucas Glover had a 68, which included a double bogey on one of the easiest par 4s on the back nine. He was alone in fourth, three shots behind.

"Bad break, and maybe a bad decision, all on the same hole," he said. "But all in all, pretty pleased. I got myself a little bit closer, and that was the goal today."

Mickelson shot 70 and was in the group four shots back at 9-under 207.

Mickelson would not have predicted seeing a ball get stuck in a tree—two days in a row. On Friday, it happened in his group to Ryan Palmer. This time, it was Lefty who stared up into the eucalyptus tree, even sending a young fan up the tree to help.

"My short game kept me in it," Mickelson said. "I didn't hit the ball the way I've been hitting it coming in. I don't feel like it's far off. But at least I'm in a position now where a good round tomorrow can get it done."

Miller scores 52 in Portland victory

DALLAS (AP)—Andre Miller scored a career-high 52 points and Juwan Howard hit a jumper with 44.8 seconds left to lift the Portland Trail Blazers past the Dallas Mavericks 114-112 Saturday.

Miller was 22 of 31 from the floor and hit 7 of 8 from the foul line as the Blazers snapped a three-game losing streak. He hit 25 of his points in the fourth quarter and overtime.

Portland scored the final six points, including Miller's layup that tied the game at 112. On the Blazers' next possession, Howard connected on a 15-foot jumper that gave Portland a 114-112 lead.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 28 points, but he missed two shots in the final minute and one just before the buzzer that could have sent the game into a second overtime.

AP

Portland Trail Blazer's Andre Miller drives around Dallas Maverick's Drew Gooden, left, in the fourth period of the NBA basketball game, Saturday, Jan. 30, 2010, in Dallas.

Magic 104, Hawks 86

At Orlando, Florida, Dwight Howard had 31 points and 19 rebounds as Orlando coasted over Atlanta.

The Magic took over first place in the Southeast Division with the victory and beat the Hawks for the third straight time this season. Rashard Lewis added 17 points, Ryan Anderson had 16 and J.J. Redick had eight points and a career-high seven assists as the Magic reserves had 32 points and 11 assists.

Joe Johnson and Jamal Crawford had 19 points apiece for the Hawks, who shot only 39.5 percent in the game.

Hornets 109, Grizzlies 102, OT

At Memphis, Tennessee, Emeka Okafor had 21 points, and Darren Collison added 17 points and a career-high 18 assists as New Orleans ended Memphis' 11-game home winning streak.

New Orleans overcame a 21-point deficit in the third quarter to win its third game out of the past four. Four of the Hornets past 10 games have gone to overtime, and New Orleans had lost the previous three before Saturday's victory.

David West led New Orleans with 22 points, while Peja Stojakovic had 20 points. Marcus Thornton finished with 14 for the Hornets.

Zach Randolph and Marc Gasol had 25 points each for Memphis.

Bucks 95, Heat 84

At Milwaukee, Hakim Warrick scored 10 of his 22 points in the fourth quarter as Milwaukee held off short-handed Miami.

Andrew Bogut and Brandon Jennings each had 17 points for Milwaukee.

Dwyane Wade led the Heat with 21 points, but was in foul trouble most of the game. Quentin Richardson had 16 points and Jermaine O'Neal had 15 points and 10 rebounds.

Wizards 106, Knicks 96

At Washington, Mike Miller scored a season-high 25 points—including seven 3-pointers—and Antawn Jamison had 21 points and a career-high 23 rebounds to lead Washington over New York.

Miller, who missed 26 games due to injuries this season, had four 3-pointers late in the third quarter and early in the fourth as the Wizards took an 85-73 lead with 10:45 to play in the fourth quarter.

On Friday, Washington had a two-point win over the New Jersey Nets despite all five of its starters failing to score in double figures for the first time since Dec. 27, 2001.

Bobcats 103, Kings 96

At Sacramento, California, Gerald Wallace scored a season-high 38 points and had 11 rebounds as Charlotte defeated Sacramento.

Wallace keyed the decisive third quarter when the Bobcats pulled away by outscoring Sacramento 34-13. He had 19 points to help Charlotte take a 90-67 lead into the fourth.

Nazr Mohammed had 17 points and 10 rebounds for the Bobcats. Stephen Jackson and Flip Murray each had 13 points.

Kevin Martin scored 31 points for the Kings, who have dropped two straight and nine of 10. Omri Casspi scored 14 points and Jason Thompson had 12 points and 16 rebounds.

Murray hoping for best vs Federer in Aussie final

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Andy Murray understands what it will take to beat Roger Federer in the Australian Open final and finally fulfill the hopes of an entire nation.

"I'm going to need to play my best match ever," Murray said Saturday. "That's what I plan on doing. If I do, I've got a good chance of winning."

The solution to ending a 74-year Grand Slam drought for Britain sounds simple in theory.

While Murray leads Federer 6-4 in career head-to-head matches, he lost their only meeting in a major at the U.S. Open final. And the only two matches that Murray has lost in his last nine against top-10 players have been to Federer.

Yet the 22-year-old Scot was so unruffled that he seemed almost bored as he explained why he believes he can handle Federer, who has won more Grand Slam singles titles than any other man.

"I've played him a lot of times so I know the way you need to play against him," Murray said. "It's not going to be too many surprises on the court tomorrow."

Federer is six years older and has 61 career titles to 14 for Murray, who is into a Grand Slam final for only the second time—the first British man to achieve that distinction in the Open era. Federer, on the other hand, played in all four finals last year and will be appearing in his 22nd overall, an all-time record.

He acknowledged that the pressure will be on Murray.

"I know what it takes (to win) and how to do it, which is definitely an advantage," Federer said. "I don't feel like the pressure's really on me having to do it again. I think he really needs it more than I do."

Then, of course, there's the intense pressure from home.

Murray is trying to become the first Brit since Fred Perry in 1936 to win a men's singles title at one of the four major tournaments. Murray's achievements at Melbourne Park have put him on the front pages of daily newspapers back home, and millions will be watching on TV.

Federer joked about the 74-year British drought after his semifinal win Friday.

"I know he'd like to win the first for British tennis since—what is it, 150,000 years?" Federer said, smiling.

But he doesn't plan to cut Murray, or the British public, any slack.

"I don't want to just give away a match. I will make sure I will make it as hard, as tough as possible for my opponent," said Federer, who is playing his fifth Australian Open final. "I'm ready to play seven times five sets. If I go three or four, that's great."

Murray's last match was on Thursday night and he said his rest leading up to the final will make him fresher than Federer. On top of that, he said he's gained maturity and experience since his last Grand Slam meeting with Federer, a straight-sets loss when he was just 20.

"I just feel physically more mature, mentally more mature," Murray said. "Just a lot more experience in these sort of situations now."

Federer agreed that Murray has adapted to the center court conditions and was more fit than the player who lost to him at the U.S. Open.

"He's consistent. He's one of the best return players we have in the game," Federer said. "He's been able to improve many things in his game that make it harder today to beat him."

The winner of the men's final earns $1.85 million and 2,000 ATP ranking points.

Regardless of the outcome, Federer will still occupy the No. 1 spot when the rankings are released Monday, entering his 268th week and matching Jimmy Connors at No. 3 in the all-time list for the total number of weeks on top.

Murray has risen to No. 3 by reaching Sunday's final, dropping only one set along the way in a run that included a victory over defending-champion and No. 2-ranked Rafael Nadal, who quit in the third set of their quarterfinal due to a knee injury.

By winning the title, Murray would move to No. 2, where he spent three weeks last August.

Federer has said it is important for his state of mind to take the first set in a match, but Murray said he would not be concerned about being down a set early on.

"Guys have come back against him in the past," Murray said, shrugging.

Murray acknowledged that Federer is "probably the best tennis player ever" but said with two players at the top of their sport, a win could come down to a few key points and a little luck.

"If I play my best, I think I've got a good chance against anyone," Murray said.

Giants, Wilson agree to 1-year deal

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Brian Wilson and the San Francisco Giants agreed to a $4,437,500, one-year deal on Saturday, avoiding an arbitration hearing.

The Giants confirmed to The Associated Press that the sides settled at the midpoint of what each proposed in arbitration.

Wilson has spent the past two of his four major league seasons as San Francisco's full-time closer, recording 79 saves during that span and going to the All-Star game in 2008. The hard-throwing right-hander has a career record of 11-13 with a 3.73 ERA and 86 saves.

"We're very proud of Brian, from the beginning when he was drafted to developing in our system," Giants vice president of baseball operations Bobby Evans said in a phone interview. "He's done a great job and become such a meaningful part of our organization. He's been an important part of this ballclub."

Wilson has established himself as a reliable ninth-inning option for a club that had lacked such a late-game presence since the days of Robb Nen.

When the sides exchanged salary proposals, the 27-year-old Wilson asked for $4,875,000 and the Giants offered $4 million.

Meanwhile, the Giants could be headed to an arbitration hearing with two-time reigning NL Cy Young Award winner Tim Lincecum. He is seeking a record $13 million and the Giants offered their ace $8 million.

Getting Wilson's deal done is another item general manager Brian Sabean can check off his long to-do list this winter. The Giants re-signed second baseman Freddy Sanchez, utility infielder Juan Uribe and catcher Bengie Molina. They also added left-handed hitter Aubrey Huff to play first base and bat cleanup, and Mark DeRosa as a utilityman and likely left fielder.

The Giants hope they've upgraded their offense enough to be a playoff contender in the NL West. San Francisco was in the wild-card chase well into September last season but ultimately missed the playoffs for the sixth straight year.

"Our goal is to win the division. It's not going to be easy to win 88 games. We have to catch two clubs," Sabean said recently. "I think it's improved but it still has to translate on the field, and the players are responsible for that. And we have more depth. We're getting closer to feeling we're all that much stronger than last year."

SERENA

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totally rude."

Williams plopped on her back at Rod Laver Arena after capturing her fifth Australian Open title, breaking her sequence of victories in this major in each odd-numbered year since 2003. It also gave her more Australian titles than any woman in the Open era and allowed her to match Billie Jean King's career total of 12 majors in singles.

Henin, in her first Grand Slam and only second tournament since she quit suddenly in May 2008, had gone on a stunning run to win 20 of 22 points to even the final at one set apiece and take a lead in the third.

With her right thigh and left knee heavily taped and hampered by a litany of aches and pains, Williams had her backers in the crowd, sister Venus among them.

But the knocks gave her the most motivation.

"That is a part of being me. Like hearing things like that that inspires me to work harder, do better," Williams said. "I feel like I have things to prove."

Henin, unranked, fell one win short of emulating fellow Belgian Kim Clijsters' amazing Grand Slam comeback at the U.S. Open last September. Clijsters beat Williams in the semifinals before taking the title at Flushing Meadows in only her third tournament back from two years in retirement.

"It's been a very emotional two weeks for me," said Henin, a 27-year-old, seven-time Grand Slam singles winner. "I thought it would never happen again. It's been almost perfect. Just the last step, I couldn't make it."

Henin slipped to 8-6 in her head-to-heads with Williams. But this was the first time they'd met in the Grand Slam final. In the even-numbered years between Serena's triumphs in Australia, Henin won the 2004 title, had to quit during the 2006 final against Amelie Mauresmo and lost in the 2008 quarterfinals to eventual champion Maria Sharapova. That was her last major.

Serena has now won three majors in 12 months, including Wimbledon and the Australian in 2009. Her conversion rate in Grand Slam finals is 12 of 15, second only to Margaret Court.

Serena teamed with Venus to successfully defend their Australian Open doubles title Friday, their 11th Grand Slam doubles championship, and planned some family celebrations Saturday night.

Another set of American siblings won the men's doubles. Twins Bob and Mike Bryan combined for their fourth Australian Open title, a 6-3, 6-7 (5), 6-3 win over Daniel Nestor of Canada and Serbian Nenad Zimonjic.

Roger Federer and Andy Murray were to play for the men's championship Sunday night. Murray is hoping to end a 74-year drought for British men at the majors. Federer, who has the record at 15 career majors, cracked that he thought the drought had lasted 150,000 years.

Still the 22-year-old Scot has already achieved something no British man has done in the Open era just by reaching two Grand Slam finals. His first ended in a straight-sets loss to Federer at the 2008 U.S. Open. Murray is more confident this time.

"I just feel physically more mature, mentally more mature," Murray said. "Just a lot more experience in these sort of situations now."

He'll need every bit of that.

Federer is playing in his 22nd Grand Slam final and has won three of the four he's reached at Melbourne Park.

Murray conceded that Federer is "probably the best tennis player ever." But he wasn't indestructible, as shown by Rafael Nadal's five-set win in the last Australian Open final and Juan Martin del Potro's victory at the U.S. Open last September.

"If I play my best, I think I've got a good chance against anyone," Murray said.

Williams said she'd tried matching Federer's numbers in the majors, but it became too hard because the target keeps moving.

She was happy to join King in sixth place on the career list of women's major champions, and doubts she'll get to Chris Evert and Martina Navratilova, who have 18 majors each.

King was at the stadium Saturday to take part in a ceremony honoring the 40-year anniversary of Margaret Court's season Grand Slam in 1970.

"Billie, we are tied," Williams said. "So I've reached my goal."

Williams said she'd like to get to 13 by winning at the French Open because her one title in Paris is the only one without a "twin."

In the meantime, she's trying to focus on the other achievements of King, who has been active in equal rights for women in sports and all walks of life.

"To tie Billie Jean King is cool. But honestly, my whole thing is to do what she did off the court," Williams said. "When I think of Billie Jean King, I don't even think about tennis. I think about all the amazing things that she's done. And that's what I want to do, with every aspect of my life."

King is complimentary about Williams and her impact on women's sports. She points to the 28-year-old player's greater maturity, mindful of Williams' U.S. Open tirade that cost her a record fine of $82,500.

Since then, Williams has set up a charity to raise money for her school in Africa, with contributions to the Haiti relief fund and elsewhere.

"At the end of the day, I've moved on," Williams said. "One moment doesn't make one person's career. It's all about the moments that you put together. For the most part, that's it."

DIAMOND

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vored foes. Wushin beat Loyola in the first round of the playoffs, 82-71, while Saipan Fresh stunned Diamond, 102-97.

Diamond seemed headed for another misfortune when Bonbon Cadagat and IT&E took the lead in the first quarter, 25-17. Cadagat hit two early triples and finished with eight points in the opening canto.

However, the defending champion began climbing back in the second period and ended the first half on top by a hair, 47-46, behind J.R. Barrios and Darwin Barbo's eight points each.

Diamond picked up where it left of in the third, widening the lead to 15, 79-64, with Brandon Talania taking his turn to contribute to the team's offense, nailing eight points.

IT&E fell behind by double digits in the third, as Cadagat was held to two points after scoring 17 in the first half, and only Peter Mendiola canned more than one field goal in that period.

The fourth period became a free throw showdown between two teams with Diamond going 13-for-23 against IT&E's 9-for-17 to complete the come-from-behind win.

With his teammates taking over on offense in the first three quarters, Elmer Esdrelon became Diamond's fourth-quarter man, hitting 11 of his 19 markers in the payoff canto. He went 6-fot-8 from the foul line.

University of Loyola needed no frequent trips from the stripe to win, as making baskets was as easy as ABC.

Jun Tabora's 10 points in the first quarter allowed Loyola to double Cool Water's output in the opening period, 24-12. Tabora's production was more than the combined four field goals (eight points) of three Cool Water players.

Cool Water remained cold on offense, as they tallied only three field goals in the second quarter, while Loyola was still shooting fish in a barrel to pad its lead to 50-23 at the break.

Loyola's lead never went down to 20 markers, as the second half continued to be a piece of cake for the Tabora-led team

Tabora totaled 20 points, while his six other teammates also finished in double figures. Ferdie de la Torre chipped in 16, Ed Cosino added 14, James Abuy tallied 13, and Mico Moran and Danny Bicera contributed 11 and 10 markers, respectively.

Masters

University of Loyola 100 – Tabora 20, de la Torre 16, Cosino 14, Abuy 13, Moran 11, Bicera 10, Jinang 6, Pineda 6, Puri 4, Manalili 1.

Cool Water 69 – Montano 16, Espinosa 11, Valencia 9, Galulu 8, Martin 6, Delfin 5, Darag 5, Buniag 4, Pablo 3.

Scoring by quarters: 24-12, 50-23, 73-45, 100-69.

Open

Diamond 105 – Barbo 25, Esdrelon 19, Barrios 17, Artates 12, M. Capalad 11, Talania 8, Fernandez 5, Guiab 4, Camacho 2, Manalo 2.

IT&E 95 – Cadagat 24, Mendiola 23, Lauron 13, Peredo 12, Chariton 8, Tumaquip 7, Dayrit 6, Moises 3.

Scoring by quarters: 27-25, 47-46, 79-64, 105-95.

RACE

From Page 28

tory in the tiebreak.

In his title match against Loyola, Race scored the first point of the game on a smash near the net and the latter continued to bring the match to the net en route to a straight set win.

Loyola made it to the finals after thwarting junior player and Tinian's Benjie Decena in the semifinals on Saturday, 6-3, 6-0.

Rafael Jones was the other junior netter to compete in the men's open division and dropped his opening match against Decena, 3-6, 4-6.

Jones also participated in the men's 4.0 singles and this time went home victorious after outclassing perennial rival Christian Miller in the finals, 8-3. Jones gained a finals entry after beating newcomer Anthony Wenceslao in the semis, 8-5, while Miller prevailed over Daniel Park in the other semis pairing, 8-2.

The men's 3.0 singles crown went to Chris Park, who edged Kennedy Izuka in the championship game, 8-5. Izuka defeated Clay McCullough-Stearns in the semis, 8-5, to arrange a title tiff against Chris Park, who ousted Father Ryan Jimenez in the second semis match, 8-5.

Amami Sakano clinched the men's 2.0 title after shutting out Morris Villanueva in the finals, 8-0. Sakano's 8-3 win over Seiya Eda moved the former to the finals against Villanueva, who edged Luther Lizama in the other semis game, 8-4.

In the women's division, three were crowned champions, namely Maru Dela Torre, Lila Mailman, and Mikayla Lopez.

Dela Torre needed extra games to thwart junior player Emily Jones in the women's 3.0 singles finals, 10-7. Dela Torre and Jones set up their title match after winning over Melanie Daly (8-3), and Sakura Imaya (walkover) in the semifinals, respectively.

In the women's 4.0 singles division, Mikayla Lopez downed Vickie Izuka in the finals, 8-3, while the women's open tiara went to Mailman.

Mailman ruled the round-robin tournament after beating Jodel Fernandez, 4-6, 6-3, 14-12, and Lydia Tan, 6-4, 6-3.

WABOL

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Subracting his -1.20 handicap based on 12 hidden holes, Wabol ended up with a net score of 68.20, still the lowest among the 69-player field.

Scores computations in a double-peoria tournament is done by dividing the total pars of the 18-hole course to the total pars of the selected holes and then multiplying the quotient to the gross score. The product will then be subtracted from the total pars of the 18-hole course to determine the net score.

Wabol's winning net score was 2.8 strokes better than runner-up Jeff Taylor, who fired a net 71. Taylor struggled in the first nine holes with his 2-over par 38, but saved second place in the double-peoria format tournament with a 3-under par 33 on the back nine. He registered 0 handicap based on the chosen holes.

For their Top 2 finish in the low net category, Wabol and Taylor pocketed $500 and $400, respectively. Joining Wabol and Taylor in the Top 6 in the lowest net and winning cash prizes were Nick Sablan (net 71), Lito Mendoza (71.40), Melvin Grey (72.20) and Norio Oishi (72.40).

Sablan, who fired a 42 and 35 on the front and back nines, respectively, lost to Taylor in the tiebreak and settled for the $300 third place purse. Mendoza carded a 43 on the front and 38 on the back to take the $200 prize, while Grey and Oishi received $100 each. Grey had a 44 and 45 on the front and back nines, respectively, while Oishi was consistent with his game, recording a 44 on both nines.

In the women's low gross category, SLLB gave away cash prizes to the Top 3 finishers.

Lorraine Babauta was $300 richer after claiming first place, following her 92, built on a score of 46 on both nines.

Babauta won by one shot against Sherlyn Jones, who tallied a 92 and took home $200. Doll Yamagishi pocketed $100 after his third-best gross score of 97.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	29	15	.659	–
Toronto	25	22	.532	5 1/2
New York	18	28	.391	12
Philadelphia	15	31	.326	15
New Jersey	4	41	.089	25 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	31	16	.660	–
Atlanta	30	16	.652	1/2
Charlotte	24	22	.522	6 1/2
Miami	24	23	.511	7
Washington	16	30	.348	14 1/2

Central Division

Cleveland	37	11	.771	–
Chicago	23	22	.511	12 1/2
Milwaukee	20	25	.444	15 1/2
Indiana	16	31	.340	20 1/2
Detroit	15	30	.333	20 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	30	17	.638	–
San Antonio	27	18	.600	2
New Orleans	26	21	.553	4
Houston	25	21	.543	4 1/2
Memphis	25	21	.543	4 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	31	15	.674	–
Utah	28	18	.609	3
Portland	28	21	.571	4 1/2
Oklahoma City	25	21	.543	6
Minnesota	10	38	.208	22

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	36	11	.766	–
Phoenix	27	21	.563	9 1/2
L.A. Clippers	20	26	.435	15 1/2
Sacramento	16	30	.348	19 1/2
Golden State	13	32	.289	22

Yesterday's Games

Orlando 104, Atlanta 86
New Orleans 109, Memphis 102, OT
Washington 106, New York 96
Milwaukee 95, Miami 84
Portland 114, Dallas 112, OT
Charlotte 103, Sacramento 96

FARMERS INSURANCE OPEN SCORES

SAN DIEGO (AP) – Scores Saturday from the Farmers Insurance Open, a $5.3 million US PGA Tour event at two par-72 Torrey Pines courses; 7,698-yard s-South and 6,986-yard n-North:

THIRD ROUND

Ryuji Imada	65n-68s-70s–203
Ben Crane	65n-71s-69s–205
Michael Sim	73s-62n-70s–205
Lucas Glover	71s-67n-68s–206
Brandt Snedeker	71s-68n-68s–207
K.J. Choi	72s-66n-69s–207
Phil Mickelson	70s-67n-70s–207
Rickie Fowler	67n-70s-70s–207
D.A. Points	68n-65s-74s–207
Matt Every	65n-70s-72s–207
Troy Merritt	69n-72s-67s–208
Ernie Els	70s-69n-69s–208
Marc Leishman	68s-69n-71s–208
Robert Allenby	67s-69n-72s–208
Spencer Levin	69n-70s-70s–209
Vance Veazey	67n-71s-71s–209
Charles Howell III	71s-69n-70s–210
Brendon de Jonge	70s-70n-70s–210
Nick Watney	71n-70s-69s–210
Michael Putnam	71s-68n-71s–210
J.B. Holmes	72s-69n-69s–210
Tom Gillis	67n-71s-72s–210
Charlie Wi	71s-66n-73s–210
John Rollins	70s-66n-74s–210
Michael Bradley	71n-69s-71s–211
Michael Connell	69s-71n-71s–211
Kevin Sutherland	74s-67n-70s–211
Shane Bertsch	69n-72s-70s–211
Hunter Mahan	72s-67n-72s–211
Alex Prugh	67n-71s-73s–211
Tom Pernice, Jr.	66n-71s-74s–211
Stephen Ames	74s-68n-69s–211
Chris Tidland	65n-71s-75s–211
Steve Marino	72s-70n-69s–211
Chez Reavie	72s-70n-69s–211
Justin Rose	71n-69s-72s–212
Fredrik Jacobson	71s-69n-72s–212
Scott Piercy	64n-75s-73s–212
Michael Allen	72s-66n-74s–212
George McNeill	69s-67n-76s–212
Boo Weekley	67n-73s-73s–213
David Lutterus	69n-70s-74s–213
Rich Barcelo	72n-69s-72s–213
Chad Collins	72n-70s-71s–213
Brett Quigley	73s-68n-73s–214
Bill Haas	70n-71s-73s–214
Rocco Mediate	69n-71s-74s–214
Derek Lamely	70s-69n-75s–214
Tim Herron	71s-70n-73s–214
Matt Jones	70s-71n-73s–214
Josh Teater	67n-74s-73s–214
Andrew McLardy	71s-70n-73s–214
Mathew Goggin	72s-70n-72s–214
Ricky Barnes	67n-75s-72s–214
Steve Lowery	67n-75s-72s–214
Luke Donald	70s-72n-72s–214
Ted Purdy	69n-71s-75s–215
Martin Laird	71n-70s-74s–215
Johnson Wagner	72s-69n-74s–215
Bill Lunde	72n-68s-75s–215
Chris Couch	68n-73s-74s–215
Jonathan Byrd	73s-69n-73s–215
James Driscoll	71s-71n-73s–215
Harrison Frazar	70n-72s-73s–215
Ben Curtis	73n-69s-73s–215
Andres Romero	69n-71s-76s–216
Jason Dufner	69n-71s-76s–216
Richard S. Johnson	71s-70n-75s–216
Tommy Armour III	74s-68n-74s–216
Martin Flores	74s-68n-74s–216
Jeff Klauk	70n-70s-78s–218
Blake Adams	69n-72s-77s–218
Nicholas Thompson	68n-73s-77s–218
Lee Janzen	74n-67s-78s–219
Rich Beem	68n-74s-77s–219
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BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Week in Sports

Sweet week for Prospects, youth netters

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Prospects and the CNMI's youth tennis players experienced the sweet taste of victory last week.

Prospects emerged from a fourth-seeded team to a champion squad after sweeping the favored Ol'Aces in the best-of-three title series in the 2009 UBA/Miller Lite Men's Basketball League at the Garapan Basketball Court.

The Bonbon Cadagat-led Prospects drew first blood in the short championship series after taking a 75-68 win in Game 1. The eventual champion then wrapped up the finals showdown with a 77-74 triumph in Game 2.

Cadagat scored 32 points in Game 1 and made 19 in the series-clinching Game 2 to unanimously win the Finals MVP trophy.

Four youth tennis players were also guaranteed to receive trophies after ruling their respective division in the 2010 Saipan Tennis Challenge.

Included on the list were Tania Tan, Seung Jae, Carol Lee, and Mikayla Lopez. Tan won the Level 1-beginners division after thumping Ami Tsukagoshi in the finals, 6-3. In the Level 1-open division finals, Jae won over Phalai Frink, 6-3. Lee took the Level 2 division title after slipping past Kwang Jae in the finals, 7-5, while Lopez prevailed over Joel Jang, 8-0.

Games in the Tennis Challenge were played at the courts located at the American Memorial Park, which witnessed the "Japanese Express" ruled the 3rd Annual Marianas Coffee Trail Run.

Nicknamed "Japanese Express," Miyachi Fujio reached the finish line at AMP in one hour, 27 minutes, 29 seconds to top the men's division. In the women's division of the 10-mile race, Saipan's Mamiko Oshima-Berger was the first finisher after submitting 1:37:33.

Also making a "firsts" last week were Ebisuya and Noni Saipan.

Ebisuya notched the first finals seat in the masters division of the 2009 PILCOWA Basketball League after winning its first two games in the playoffs at the JP Center Basketball Court.

Ebisuya defeated Cool Water in the first round, 98-87, and then whipped Wushin Corp. in the semifinals of the winner's bracket, 83-64, to march into the finals.

In the open division, Noni first topped IT&E, 81-74, and then Saipan Fresh Market, 108-99, to make it to the best-of-three championship round.

Still in basketball, Grace Christian Academy went on a streak last week in the 2010 MISO Basketball League at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The Eagles stunned former champion Southern, 52-49, to extend their winning run to three.

Also keeping their streak are Natibu and Island Rebels, who are tied for the lead in Chamolinian Softball Association's 2009 Budweiser Slow-pitch Softball League after posting identical 7-0 records.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Ebisuya players pose for a group photo after securing the first finals berth in the masters division of the PILCOWA caging last week.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Perry Inos Jr. gives teammate Bonbon Cadagat a victory ride after Prospects swept Ol'Aces in the finals in the UBA caging last week.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
GCA's Kevin De Leon dribbles around the defense of Southern's Ian Benavente during their varsity game in the MISO caging last week at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Noni Saipan's Banjo Basila, center, is sandwiched by Saipan Fresh Market's William Opone, left, and Jun Estolas during their semis game in the PILCOWA caging.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Mamiko Oshima-Berger was the first female finisher in the 10-mile division race of the 3rd Annual Marianas Coffee Trail Run.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Angelo Jones stretches to reach for the ball during the Level 4 singles event in the 2010 Saipan Tennis Challenge at the AMP courts.

START/ FINISH LINE

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Japanese Express Miyachi Fujio, left, joins Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel in crossing the finish of the 3rd Annual Marianas Coffee Trail Run at the American Memorial Park.

Warner brings end to stirring 12-year NFL career

Kurt Warner thanked God, hugged his children and wife and said goodbye to an NFL career that seems the stuff of sports fiction.

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Sports

Sweet week for Prospects, youth netters

Prospects and the CNMI's youth tennis players experienced the sweet taste of victory last week.

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Serena tops Henin for Aussie Open crown

By JOHN PYE
AP SPORTS WRITER

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Serena Williams loves a good underdog story and understood that most of the crowd was behind Justine Henin.

All that sentiment was put aside once she heard an insult from the stands, a crack that went right to the heart of all athletes. Williams surged to a 6-4, 3-6, 6-2 victory in the Australian Open final Saturday, closing this chapter on Henin's remarkable comeback from retirement.

"I think everyone was for Justine tonight," Williams said. "But you know what really helped me out? This one guy was like, 'You can beat her Justine, she's not that good.'

"I looked at that guy and I was like, you don't know me," Williams added, wagging her finger. "I think I won all the games after that because that's

See SERENA on Page 26

Serena Williams of the United States holds the trophy after beating Justine Henin of Belgium, to win the women's singles final match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Saturday, Jan. 30, 2010.

AP

Diamond, Loyola stay alive

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Diamond Ali'i and University of Loyola lived for another day after prevailing in separate make-or-break playoff matches in the 2009 PILCOWA Basketball League on Saturday the JP Center Basketball Court.

Diamond recorded a 105-95 win over IT&E to keep its title defense alive in the open division. In the masters division, Loyola also remained in contention for the second finals ticket after crushing Cool Water, 100-69.

Loyola will face Wushin Corp. tomorrow for another do-or-die game with the winner advancing to the best-of-three title series against pennant champion and first finalist Ebisuya. Diamond will duel Saipan Fresh Market in open division's last semis game, also set for Tuesday, with the victor battling Noni Saipan in the finals.

Their big victories in the weekend's playoff matches are what Loyola and Diamond needed to have momentum going into their respective semis games against slightly fa-

See DIAMOND on Page 26

University of Loyola's Mico Moran goes for a fastbreak layup against Cool Water during their playoff game in the PILCOWA caging on Saturday at the JP Center Basketball Court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Race sweeps way to men's open title

Jeff Race stretches for a shot near the net against Peter Loyola during their men's open singles finals match in the 2010 Saipan Tennis Challenge yesterday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI coach Jeff Race lived up to expectations, sweeping his way to the championship of the men's open singles division of the 2010 Saipan Tennis Challenge.

Seeded first in the centerpiece event of the weekend tournament played at the American Memorial Park tennis courts, Race finished on top of the field after beating Peter Loyola in straight sets on Sunday, 6-4, 6-4.

Race advanced to the finals after pulling off an exhausting three-set victory over 2006 Micronesian Games gold medalist and former NCAA Division I player Todd Montgomery.

A 6-2 win in the opening set moved Race a win away from marching into the finals, but Montgomery regained his bearings in the second set and escaped with a 7-5 triumph to force a deciding third set.

The clincher was another down-to-the-wire finish with Race and Montgomery playing extra games before the CNMI coach eked out a 10-7 vic-

See RACE on Page 26

Wabol triumphs in SLLB fundraiser

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Veteran golfer Jess Wabol walked away as the big winner in the 2010 Saipan Little League Baseball, Inc. Golf Fundraising Tournament, topping both the double-peoria format and the low gross category.

The CNMI's many time representative to regional golf tournaments tamed the greens and fairways of the west course of the Laolao Bay Golf Resort, shooting an impressive 5-under par 67 on Saturday. Wabol could have scored better than 67, had he not bogeyed the last three holes.

The former Oleai Elementary School principal drilled a 1-under 35 on the front nine and despite three straight bogeys, Wabol still surpassed his performance in the first nine holes with a 4-under par 32 on the back.

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Saipan Little League Baseball golf tournament winner Jess Wabol is flanked by SLLB president Tony Rogolifoi, left, and treasurer Walter Macaranas during the awards ceremony on Saturday at the poolside of the Laolao Bay Golf Resort.